Master's thesis

NTNU
Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences
Department of Sociology and Political Science

Camilla Wangsmo Westvik

The Isolated Community

A qualitative inquiry into motivation and playstyle amongst Pokémon GO players in Trondheim during the Covid-19 pandemic

Master's thesis in Media, Communication and Information Technology
Supervisor: Aksel Tjora
June 2022

NTNU
Kunnskap for en bedre verden

Camilla Wangsmo Westvik

The Isolated Community

A qualitative inquiry into motivation and playstyle amongst Pokémon GO players in Trondheim during the Covid-19 pandemic

Master's thesis in Media, Communication and Information Technology
Supervisor: Aksel Tjora
June 2022

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Faculty of Social and Educational Sciences
Department of Sociology and Political Science

NTNU
Norwegian University of
Science and Technology

Abstract

This inquiry explores motivational changes amongst players of Pokémon GO - an augmented-reality (AR) location-based game (LBG) - during the covid-19 pandemic in Trondheim. The main research question is: "*What factors affect motivation amongst players of Pokémon GO in Trondheim*". In addition, the inquiry investigates the effects of social distancing and Niantic's implemented countermeasures on motivation and playstyle during the pandemic. A methodology based in a stepwise-deductive inductive method led to the generation of four main themes for analysis: (1) how does motivation differentiate between generations, and how does the game support players' need-satisfaction in regards to (2) autonomy, (3) competence and (4) relatedness? The results show that the implemented countermeasures have changed the basic nature of the game, from incentivising physical movement and social interaction, to incentivising physically and socially isolated play. This has led to a change in gameplay culture, induced by a change in collective cultural practices. This change in collective practices has facilitated a substantial increase in player autonomy, while at the same time decreasing the relatedness of players, resulting in *isolation-induced autonomy*. The decrease in relatedness has led to a significant decrease in community feeling amongst its players, facilitated by the prolonged presence of the countermeasures. As a result, the Pokémon GO community has effectively been reshaped into an isolated community.

Sammendrag

Denne undersøkelsen utforsker motivasjonsendringer blant spillere av Pokémon GO - et augmented reality (AR) lokasjonsbasert spill (LBG) - under covid-19 pandemien i Trondheim. Hovedproblemstillingen er: "*Hvilke faktorer påvirker motivasjonen hos Pokémon GO spillere i Trondheim*?". I tillegg undersøkes også effekten av sosial distansering og Niantic sine spill-tekniske endringer på motivasjon og spillestil under pandemien. En metode basert på stegvis-deduktiv induktiv metode har ledet til generering av fire hovedtema for analysen; (1) hvordan differensierer motivasjonsfaktorer mellom generasjonene, og hvordan støtter spillet spillernes behovsdekning for (2) autonomi, (3) kompetanse og (4) tilhørighet? Resultatene viser at de implementerte spill-tekniske endringene har forandret spillets grunnleggende natur, fra å insentivere fysisk aktivitet og sosial interaksjon, til å insentivere fysisk og sosialt isolert spilling. Dette har ført til en endring i spillkultur, indusert av en endring i kollektive kulturelle praksiser. Disse endringene i kollektive praksiser har lagt til rette for en signifikant økning i personlig autonomi, samtidig som en reduksjon i tilhørighet, som har resultert i *isolasjons-indusert autonomi*. Reduksjonen i tilhørighet har ført til en substansiell nedgang i fellesskapsfølelse blant spillerne, som blir forsterket av tilstedeværelsen av de spill-tekniske endringene. Som et resultat av dette, har Pokémon GO blitt et isolert felleskap under pandemien.

Foreword

The summer of 2016 was the summer of Pokémon GO. *Everyone* played it, including myself. But in likeness with most people I know, this new hobby was short-lived. My initial hype and excitement fell away with the autumn leaves. I deleted the game off my phone, and spent the next 4 years not giving the game a single thought. Then came the fall of 2020. While the world was in the midst of the worst health crisis in modern times, I found myself being drawn back into the world of Pokémon. The girl who once used to collect Pokémon cards, and religiously watched the TV-show every morning before school, found comfort in the nostalgia that Pokémon GO provided. During the next winter I spent countless days walking around the city, and endless nights driving around, scouting for Pocket Monsters. But in contrast to the Summer of Pokémon, where every other person I passed was looking down at their phone, there were few Pokémon trainers to spot out in the wild. I wondered where they all had gone. This simple question is one I have carried with me to this day, and which has motivated me to write this thesis.

First I want to thank my supervisor, Aksel Tjora, who has been a valuable resource throughout this process. With your great methodological knowledge, you have helped guide me at times when I have lost my direction. Next I want to thank Melanie Magin for giving us MKI students a good foundation, and helpful tools, prior to this process. A special thank you goes out to all my informants, who have wholeheartedly opened up to me about their experiences, and have made me very proud of being a part of the Pokémon GO community. And most importantly, I want to thank all of the amazing people in my life. Thank you to my father, who was my first Pokémon partner-in-crime, and to my mother, who has always been a constant source of strength in my life. And thank you to Kristian, my love, for always being my rock and cheerleader.

For the past 5 years, ever since I moved to Trondheim in the pursuit of deep diving into social science, I have often daydreamed about what I would one day write my masters thesis about. The fact that I would end up writing my thesis about Pokémon GO might have been the last thing I thought when I entered Dragvoll on that first day. But fate works in mysterious ways, and it has guided me here. It is with tremendous pleasure that I now turn in this thesis, as a love letter to the Pokémon GO community.

Pokémon Trainers; this one's for you.

Trondheim, June 2022

Camilla Westvik

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

The first-of-its-kind augmented reality mobile game Pokémon GO was released in July 2016, by the San Francisco-based game development company Niantic. In the first few months after its release, the game generated a total of 500 million downloads, and a total of 650 million as of February 2017 (Sakar, 2017). The game grossed an astonishing $206.5 million the first month after its release, During this time, the game topped the mobile downloads chart in 70 different countries across the world and was the highest grossing mobile game in 55 countries simultaneously. As a result, it set world records for both the highest grossing and most downloaded mobile game in its first month (Swatman, 2016). This particular summer, 'everyone' was playing Pokémon GO. Even though the number of active players has decreased over time, Niantic has managed to establish a significant worldwide player base, with an average of approximately 81 million monthly players as of April 2022 (Active Player, 2022).

Pokémon GO is a game which has physical movement, exploration and social interaction as central game design principles. The game was made with the intention to incentivize physical activity amongst its users, as a sort of gamification of physical exercise. It also incentivizes players to socialise with others face to face. However, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit in March 2020, the game in its original form suddenly became unplayable. Players worldwide were unable to leave their homes, either because of social distancing measures and lockdowns, or simply due to fear of viral contamination. Therefore, to facilitate their player base, Niantic was forced to implement in-game countermeasures to facilitate at-home play. These implemented countermeasures were a literal game changer, leading to modifications of several central features and gameplay mechanics, to make socially and physically isolated play possible during an extraordinary situation. What happens to the motivation of players when a game that is centred around physical movement transforms into a sedentary version of itself? This is the central question that this thesis intends to explore.

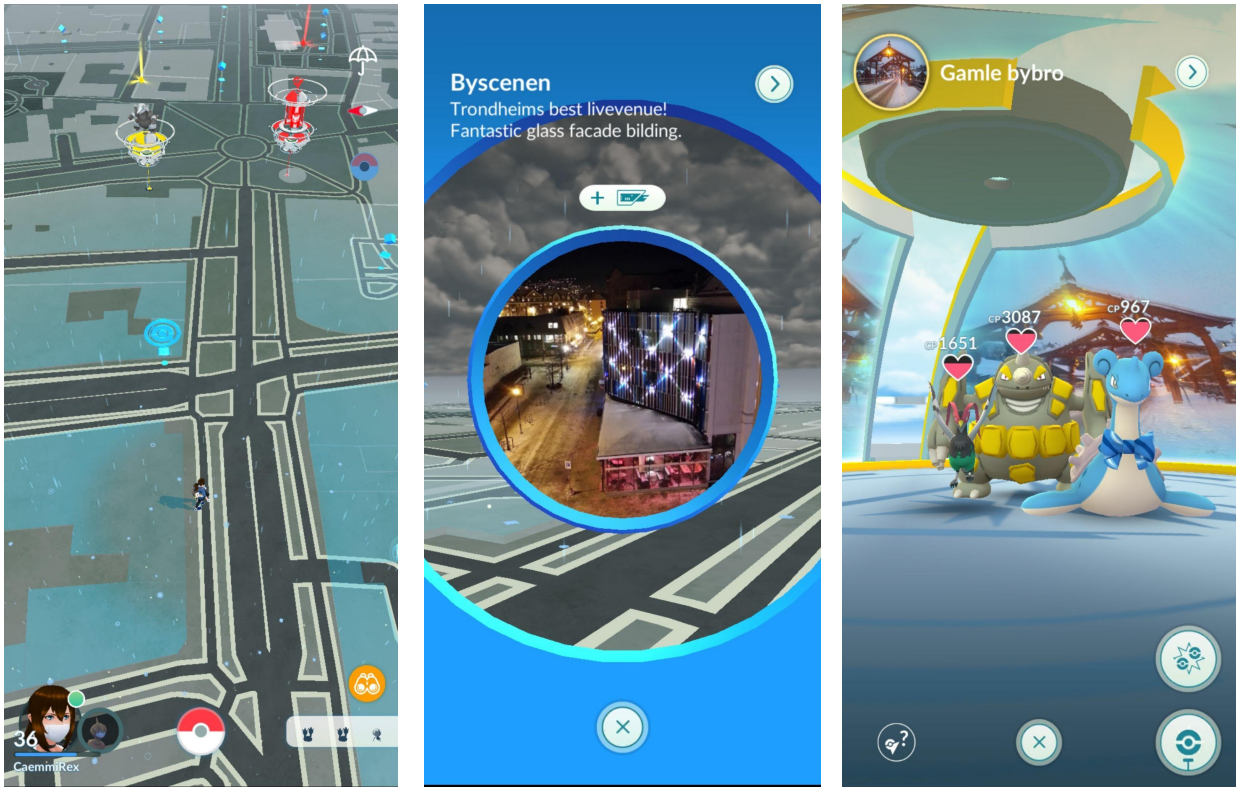
1.1 How Pokémon GO Works

Pokémon GO is an augmented reality (AR) location-based game (LBG), which combines physical and digital elements. The game uses GPS technology to track players' movements. Players walk around in the real world while their movements are shown on the virtual map on the mobile screen. Each step the player takes on the physical plane is mirrored on the digital plane. The goal of the game is to find, capture, collect, evolve and battle with - and against - *Pokémon* (Pocket Monsters). In real time, Pokémon *spawn* (appear) on the virtual map. Players can then tap on, and subsequently attempt to catch, these Pokémon by throwing balls at them. These balls are known as *Poké Balls*, which is an essential in-game resource. Different types of valuable in-game resources can be collected from PokèStops.

Illustrations: (1) Catch Screen, (2) Successful Catch, (3) Pokémon Statistics Screen.

PokèStops are plot-points on the virtual map which correspond with real world locations, monuments or landmarks. To collect resources from a PokèStop, players have to locate it on the

map, and physically walk up the PokèStop to interact with it. Prior to March 2020, players had to be within a 40 metre radius of a PokèStop to do so. PokèStops have a set reload period, which hinders players from staying in one place and constantly 'spinning' it to acquire resources. If players wish to continually catch Pokémon, and acquire enough resources to do so, they must keep moving. If players want to catch Pokémon while stationary, or wish to boost the frequency of Pokémon spawning around them while walking, they can use an *Incense*. Incense is another in-game resource. When activated from the player's inventory, the Incense spawns a Pokémon in the player's immediate vicinity, in addition to the other Pokémon that are already present. After a set time period, it spawns a new Pokémon. The other one, if uncaught, disappears. Prior to April 2020, the standard duration of an Incense was 30 minutes, and the effectiveness of an incense was higher when moving than while stationary.



Illustrations: (1) Pokémon GO Map, (2) PokèStop, (3) Gym with Defending Pokémon

The game is largely centred around physical movement. Its various gameplay elements incentivizes players to leave their homes, walk around in their local area and actively explore it.

Staying immobile effectively hinders active gameplay. In addition to the aforementioned single-player function of catching, Pokémon GO also has several multiplayer functions which incentivizes social interaction with other players. The main multiplayer functions revolve around the concept of *Gyms*. Gyms are in-game structures which players can interact with, similarly to PokèStops. Players can spin Gyms for resources, but Gyms serve two additional purposes; procuring in-game currency (*PokèCoins*) and *raiding*.

Firstly, players can obtain PokèCoins by physically walking to a Gym and placing one of their Pokémon in it. The main purpose of this is to *defend* the Gym. Up to six players can have a Pokémon placed in a Gym at the same time, and they have to belong to the same *Team*. When signing up to the game, players have to choose one of the following Teams to affiliate with; Mystic, Valor or Instinct. When members of one Team are defending a Gym, players from another Team can attempt to take over the Gym, by battling these Pokémon with their own to win. If they win, the winning player can place one of their own Pokémon in it, and so can others from the same Team. When another Team defeats a Gym and takes over, the players who were previously defending the Gym receive their obtained PokèCoins. This is the only way for players to obtain PokèCoins without paying real money for it, thus making it very popular amongst players. Gym defence over long periods of time can therefore be hard. Players who defend a Gym can obtain 1 PokèCoin per 10 minutes and can earn a maximum of 50 PokèCoins per day.

Secondly, at random times throughout the day, Gyms spawn *Raids*. The purpose of a Raid is to battle against the Raid Boss. Before the battle starts, players choose six of their own Pokémon, and have 180-300 seconds to defeat it, depending on the difficulty. If defeated, players can attempt to catch and obtain the Raid Boss. Raids have three tiers of difficulty; 1-star, 3-star and 5-star. An average player can usually defeat a 1-star Raid boss by themselves, while 3-star Raid bosses may be single-handedly defeated by higher level players with strong Pokémon. 5-star Raid bosses, however, are practically impossible to defeat single-handedly, and are therefore designed to be a group activity. Three to five players are typically needed to defeat it.

Illustrations: (1) Legendary Raid Boss, (2) Players waiting in Raid Lobby, (3) Raid Battle

5-star Raids feature *Legendary* Pokémon which cannot be acquired by other means than raiding. This type of Raid is therefore especially popular. To participate in a Raid, players need to be physically present next to a Gym when it starts. For this reason, Gyms are popular meeting places for players who wish to Raid, making it a social event. In addition, players need to have a *Raid Pass* to participate, which can be acquired for free once a day by spinning the disc at any Gym. Additional Raid Passes may be bought with PokèCoins in the in-game shop. In April 2020, *Remote Raid Passes* were introduced, which allowed players to participate in Raids without having to be physically present at a Gym.

1.2 Overview of the Thesis

The main objective of this thesis is to investigate whether, and in what ways, the motivations of Pokémon GO players have changed during Covid-19. Experiences with playing the game might differentiate based on location, and therefore, this inquiry will focus on players in one geographical location; Trondheim. This inquiry is qualitative, and the data has been acquired through in-depth interviews with 9 individual players. Accordingly, the main research question of this inquiry is as follows;

> *«What factors affect motivation amongst players of Pokémon GO in Trondheim?»*

In addition to the interviews, a mapping of the implemented countermeasures by Niantic has also been conducted. The purpose of this is to gain an overview of the actual changes that have been made, which can be used as a framework for analysing the experiences of players during the pandemic. An overview of these countermeasures can be found in Appendix 1. In light of this, the sub-research question of this inquiry is as follows;

> *«In what ways has social distancing and Niantic's implemented countermeasures affected players' motivations and playstyle?»*

This thesis is subdivided into five chapters. In chapter two, I will give an overview of relevant theory and previous research on motivation in general and video game motivation in particular. In addition, the chapter will include a subchapter on the topic of community, and a subchapter about previous research on Pokèmon GO. In chapter three, I will give an overview of the research process and central methodological considerations of this inquiry. In chapter four, I will present my results. This chapter is divided into four subchapters which correspond with the four main themes of the inquiry. Lastly, in chapter five, I will discuss the results of the inquiry in light of the implemented countermeasures by Niantic and relevant theory, before I give my final thoughts on the future of Pokémon GO in the concluding chapter.

2. Theory and Previous Research

In this chapter, I will present relevant theory and previous research. The main purpose of this inquiry is to explore factors which may affect the motivations of Pokémon GO players in Trondheim. Therefore, literature on motivation is central to the inquiry. For the purpose of this thesis, I have chosen Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as an overarching theory. This theory will be presented in the first section. The SDT perspective has previously been used as the theoretical basis for analysis of video game motivation. Previously research on video game motivation which utilises this theory will be presented in the second section. The purpose of this is to contextualise the overarching theory within the specific context of video game motivation. In the third section, I will present theory and previous research on the subject of community. The theme of community is central to Pokémon GO, and literature on this may be viewed as highly relevant to the inquiry. In addition, the SDT perspective largely focuses on individual aspects, and therefore lacks in collective aspects which can be provided by literature on community. The literature on community will therefore be complementary to the literature on motivation in general and video game motivation in particular. In the concluding section, I will provide an overview of previous research on Pokémon GO.

2.1 Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a theory that is often used in studies of human motivation. The theory examines the role of people's inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs as a basis for self-motivation and personality integration. It also explores the necessary conditions for fostering these positive motivational processes. Through their research on self-regulated motivation, Ryan & Deci (2000) have identified three inherent psychological needs which foster human motivation; need for *autonomy,* need for *competence* and need for *relatedness*. They argue that these three conditions must be met to secure intrinsic motivation in persons (p. 68). Intrinsic motivation is the inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one's capabilities, to explore, and to learn. Intrinsic motivation describes

the natural, human inclination towards assimilation, mastery, spontaneous interest and exploration. These factors are argued to be essential to cognitive and social development in persons in all stages of life. SDT does not concern itself with the causes of intrinsic motivation, but rather examines conditions which either increase or reduce intrinsic motivation (p. 69).

Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) is a subtheory within SDT which aims to specify factors that can explain variation in intrinsic motivation. CET focuses on the fundamental need for two of the aforementioned basic psychological needs; autonomy and competence. The theory argues that social-contextual events (feedback and reward) increases a person's feeling of competence during an action, and in return enhances intrinsic motivation for doing that task. Optimal challenges were also found to facilitate intrinsic motivation. The theory furtherly argues that a feeling of competence must be accompanied with a feeling of autonomy. In other words, people must perceive their actions as autonomous, or self-determined, for intrinsic motivation to be present (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). Based on this, a question of autonomy versus control arises. While tangible rewards for an action can increase intrinsic motivation, factors which signify a sense of control (deadlines, directives and improsed goals) can undermine intrinsic motivation. In contrast, perceived choice and opportunities for self-direction may enhance intrinsic motivation, because it allows people to feel a greater sense of autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 34). In addition to autonomy and competence, a feeling of relatedness is viewed to enhance intrinsic motivation in persons. CET argues that intrinsic motivation is more likely to flourish in settings where persons feel a sense of security and relatedness. While intrinsically motivated actions often do occur in isolated settings, a secure relational base seems to be important for the expression of intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71). In light of this, the CET framework suggests that there are strong links between intrinsic motivation and the satisfaction of the human needs for autonomy and competence, as well as the need for relatedness in some cases.

While these three factors are argued to be central to the fostering of intrinsic motivation, it is important to stress that CET argues that people will only be intrinsically motivated for activities which hold intrinsic interest for them. In other words, for people to be intrinsically motivated for an activity, the activity needs to appeal to a sense of novelty, challenge or aesthetic value. The

principles of CET do not apply to activities which do not meet either one of these criteria, because these activities are not experienced as intrinsically motivating in and of itself. To understand such activities, one has to view them within the context of extrinsic motivation. The term *extrinsic* motivation refers to the performance of an activity to attain some separable outcome, or external goal (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71). This secondary type of motivation stands in contrast to intrinsic motivation, which refers to performing an activity for the sole purpose of the personal satisfaction it brings.

In light of this, SDT and CET highlight the central role of autonomy, competence and relatedness for both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. SDT can be utilised as an overarching theory for researching motivation within a variety of social contexts. In the next section I will present SDT within the context of gaming, and how the theory can be utilised while analysing people's motivation when playing video games.

2.2 Self-Determination in Video Games

As previously mentioned, SDT has been used as a theoretical basis for analysis of motivational patterns in different social contexts. Some of these are recreational contexts, such as sports (e.g., Frederick & Ryan, 1995) and puzzle play (e.g., Deci, 1975). Gaming is a social, recreational activity, and one could therefore presume that SDT may be used as a theoretical basis for analysis of video game motivation. Ryan, Rigby and Przybylski (2006) argue that the theory may indeed be used for this purpose. According to them, the reason for this is that players of all types seek to satisfy basic psychological needs while playing video games. They argue that SDT may be especially relevant for analysing intrinsic motivations in a gaming context, because they suggest that players typically play games because they are intrinsically satisfying, or in other words; fun. Extrinsic motivation is viewed to be less relevant to the gaming context, because players gain few rewards or social approval while gaming. Often the opposite is the case, because players have to pay to be involved and sometimes face disapproval by peers for participating in play (p. 349). Therefore, intrinsic motivation is believed to be the key factor that facilitates video game play.

The three key psychological needs, that have previously been described, can be used to expand upon how video game design and specific gaming contexts can increase or reduce intrinsic motivation amongst players. In a historical context, prior to the development of home-based video game systems in the 80s and 90s, arcade games were the norm. These arcade games were quite constrained in their game design, giving players a low degree of choice over actions while playing. Since the dawn of home-based video games, video game developers have tapped into the basic psychological need for autonomy. In the early years of home-based video game development, games like *The Legend of Zelda* and *Final Fantasy* provided players with a wide range of in-game choices over goals undertaken, strategies chosen, and varied opportunities for action. Creators of such games fostered a sense of *equifinality* (different roads to the same end) in terms of overall achievement, and supported player autonomy by providing multiple choices for action; which skills to acquire, which missions to choose and how their characters appear. By advancing through the game, such supported autonomy gave players the opportunity to shape the game's narrative all the while progressing through the game's main storyline (Przybylski, Rigby & Ryan, 2010, p. 156). Many games today follow this recipe, and provide players with a plethora of opportunities for exercising their autonomy. Video games are viewed to foster a high degree of player *autonomy* in and of itself, because of people's self-directedness in choosing to play. People's willingness to play a game, however, will naturally vary based on game design, content or personal appeal (Ryan et.al, 2006, p. 349). In light of this, while many video games are inherently autonomy supportive, different games can either increase or reduce player autonomy based on whether or not these aforementioned features are present

Within a video game context, *competence* may be viewed as the need for challenge and mastery. CET proposes that opportunities to acquire new abilities or skills, be optimally challenged or receive positive feedback enhances the perceived competence of individuals, and in turn, their intrinsic motivation. Therefore, perceived competence would be expected to be high in video game contexts where game controls are intuitive and easily mastered by players, where in-game tasks provide optimal challenges throughout the course of the game, and where players experience continuous positive feedback to their actions. Competence is likely to be one of the most central satisfactions provided by games, because video games represent arenas where individuals can feel accomplished and in control (Ryan et.al, 2006, pp. 349-50). Early arcade

games such as *Pong* and *Donkey Kong* excelled at supporting the player's fundamental need for competence, because of one specific game-technical aspect; the balancing of challenge and skill. In these games, the level of challenge gradually increased in tandem with player progression. This balancing of challenge and player ability is crucial for competence support; if challenges underwhelm players, it leads to boredom, and if challenges overwhelm players, it will generate frustration (Przybylski et.al, 2010, p. 155). Therefore, competence supportive games will steadily increase the game's difficulty as a player progresses in their levelling and skill development, always assuring that players have optimal challenges, to give them a feeling of success when optimally challenging tasks are completed.

The last psychological need, *relatedness*, is experienced when a person feels connected with others. Social interaction has always been a relevant factor in video game play, both in an arcade- and home-based setting, where players can interact with others who are physically close to them. In recent years, the rise of Massive Multiplayer Online (MMO) video games, such as *World of Warcraft*, has given players the opportunity to interact with fellow players in geographically remote locations, within large, shared virtual worlds. As long as players have internet access, they can join this central virtual world and can cooperate with - and battle against - other players. In a cooperation setting, players can choose to band together in either short-term groups, or more permanent groups (guilds, clans, factions) to complete missions or fight other groups. Game developers have also utilised internet-based technologies to facilitate longer term relationships between players via web forums, online chats and voiceover Internet protocol communication (Przybylski et.al, 2010, p. 156). In their survey study of gamers with MMO experience, Ryan, Rigby and Przybylski (2006) found that the need for relatedness represented an important satisfaction that promoted presence, game enjoyment, and an intention for future play of MMOs (p. 359). In light of this, the need for relatedness seems to be a relevant factor for the facilitation of intrinsic motivation in players, at least in a multiplayer setting.

Based on the prerequisites of need-satisfaction that have previously been presented, I have composed a table that details *promoting* and *inhibiting* factors in regards to video game motivation. The three main prerequisites - autonomy, competence and relatedness - are included. This table also includes a set of evaluative questions, corresponding with each of the

promoting/inhibiting factors, which may in turn be used to evaluate whether specific video games support the procurement of intrinsic motivation for its players.

Table 1: SDT Model of Video Game Motivation

Need-Satisfaction in Video Games			
	Promoting Factors	Inhibiting Factors	Evaluative Questions
Autonomy			
	Flexibility of Goals	Rigidity of Goals	To what degree may players choose their own goals?
	Flexibility of Strategy	Rigidity of Strategy	To what degree may players choose their own strategy?
	Flexibility of Actions	Rigdity of Actions	To what degree may players do what they want?
Competence			
	Skill Improvement	Lack of Skill Improvement	Does the game faciliatate continuous improvement of skills?
	Optimal Challenges	Sub-Optimal Challenges	Does the game provide an appropriate level of challenge?
	Positive Feedback	Lack of Feedback	Does the game provide players with appropriate feedback?
	Balance: Challenge-Skill	Imbalance: Challenge-Skill	Does the game manage to balance challenge and skill?
Relatedness			
	Community	Lack of Community	Does the game facilliate community building?
	Cooperation	Lack of Cooperation	Does the game allow for cooperation between players?
	Communication	Lack of Communication	Does the game provide appropriate communication channels?

Source: Based on Przybylski et.al. (2010) & Ryan et.al. (2006).

Because of its lack of physical substance, actions and orientation, virtual environments will often not feel intuitive to players. When entering a new video game environment, players therefore need to learn to navigate themselves within the virtual environment and get used to interacting with the control interface. After some time players will have overcome this initial obstacle and can effortlessly perform intended actions within the virtual landscape. Przybylski et.al. (2010) coined this concept as *mastery of controls.* Mastery of controls is an important, but not sufficient, condition for achieving psychologically need-satisfying play. The reason for this not being sufficient in and of itself, is because the process of gaining mastery of controls is not implicitly satisfying to the player. It is all the while important, because this skill unlocks the game's potential to meet the player's psychological needs; for autonomy, by allowing players to freely explore, and for competence, by allowing the player to solve puzzles or emerge victorious from combat. Amongst players and developers, the term is often referred to as a *learning curve*. Games with complex controls and mechanics have a "steep" learning curve, and the process of acquiring mastery is viewed as a kind of price-of-admission or investment for future play (p. 156). In light of this, mastery of controls is an important factor to keep in mind while researching

video game motivation, because it plays a part in scaffolding the satisfaction of players' psychological needs.

2.3 On Community

In previous research on intrinsic video game motivation, the concepts of autonomy and competence are often highlighted as the most central prerequisites of motivation. However, while often mentioned, the specific value of relatedness for intrinsic motivation is seldom expanded upon. One often refers to collective relatedness as *community*. There is currently no universal definition of what a community is. For the purpose of this thesis, I will use Grabher & Ibert's (2014) definition, where a community is viewed to be;

"an informal group of people who share a common practice and voluntarily adhere to common rules (such as rules of admission, exclusion and behaviour). These shared practices and rules enact a system of relationships between people, activities and the world." (p. 100).

While communities exist in all forms, there are two overarching types; *physical* and *virtual* communities. Physical and virtual communities are differentiated based on one central concept; spatial proximity. Members of physical communities interact and communicate with each other in close physical proximity to one another (Grabher & Ibert, 2014, pp. 97-98). Members of virtual communities however, interact and communicate remotely via internet mediated communication tools, and in publicly accessible online environments. While physical encounters between members of virtual communities do happen, internet mediated communication is its main form (p. 101). *Hybrid* communities have become increasingly more common. Hybrid communities combine the two spheres. Such communities may be mainly virtual, but provide temporary physical community spaces, or vice versa (p. 98). In this way, members of hybrid communities can benefit from positive aspects of being part of both types of communities simultaneously.

One type of hybrid community that is especially relevant in the context of gaming communities, that form temporarily amongst players when playing a game centred around physical interaction and cooperation, is *hybrid event communities*. An event is a social happening which is limited in time and space. Events are generally viewed as physical in nature, because they often take place at a specific location, where participants physically interact with each other over a limited time period. Event communities are therefore viewed to be temporary in nature. However, interaction between attendees can continue virtually after the actual event has finished, which in effect creates a hybrid form of event community. Simons (2018) defines such a community as:

"A diverse and dynamic community around shared meanings and symbols consisting of a complementary structure of event practices and online practices. The event is a space in which a community physically comes together, performing interaction rituals that enhance further online social interaction" (p. 149).

Here, Simons uses Collins' (2004) concept of *interaction ritual chains* to highlight how shared social practices are performed, and in turn, enhance togetherness for members of event communities. Collins' theory of interaction ritual chains builds on the work of Durkheim, that is interpreted through the lens of Goffman's micro sociology. Here, he provides a model which can be utilised to study specific (event) practices, while also focusing on the structural outcomes of these practices. A successful *interaction ritual*, according to Collins, consists of four necessary prerequisites; bodily co-presence, barriers to outsiders, mutual focus of attention and shared mood. Together, these factors create a state of *collective effervescence* - a rhythmic entrainment which causes individuals to feel a sense of oneness (Collins, 2004, p. 299). A successfully performed interaction ritual can lead to several outcomes; group solidarity, emotional energy, symbols of social relationship (p. 300). Emotional energy that is obtained through a successful ritual stimulates event participants to seek out similar experiences, in effect creating interaction ritual *chains* (Simons, 2018, pp. 146-147).

According to Garbher & Ibert's (2014) aforementioned definition, common practices is a defining characteristic of communities. In hybrid event communities, both offline and online event practices are central. A study by Rihova et.al (2015), identified three distinguished types of

offline event practices; bonding, communing, and belonging. *Bonding* practices occur when individuals socialise with significant others, to catch up with each other or share experiences amongst themselves. *Communing* practices occur when individuals find themselves removed from their daily routines and ordinary lives, and experience the event as an 'extraordinary' situation. In this experiential state, strong yet temporary social links are made between strangers. The last type, *belonging* practices, is linked to what Maffesoli (1996) calls *neo tribes*; emotional communities of interest around particular themes. When participating in a belonging practice, event participants may come to experience a sense of belonging that goes beyond the scope of the event, which can result in a long-term commitment to the community - and potentially to the event itself (Simons, 2018, p. 148). In this way, different kinds of offline event practices can result in a feeling of relatedness between participants, whether individuals are previously acquainted or not.

In addition to offline practices, online event practices are also central to the creation and maintenance of event communities. Such practices occur throughout all stages of the event journey - both before, during and after the event. These range from controlled one-way interactions by event organisers and marketers, to interactions that happen solely between participants. Many event organisers recognize the possibility that lies in the utilisation of digital technologies (e.g. social media channels and mobile applications), to heighten the event experience via online practices (Simons, 2018, p. 148). While the main motivations for these practices are economic, they also serve a cultural purpose; the creation of expectations, desired behaviours, ways of imagining the event 'world' (Holt, 2015). However, most of the online practices around events are outside the scope of event organisers (Wilks, 2012). These include event participants who have met during the event, who prolong their friendship online by sharing photos from the event, discussing the event, or sharing personal experiences with each other. Such interactions can happen on public forums, such as Facebook or Reddit pages, or in closed forums such as Discord servers or Messenger groups.

2.4 State of Research into Pokémon GO

Since the release of the game in 2016, its larger-than-life popularity has attracted the attention of the public, the media, and the research community alike. Even though Pokémon GO is a relatively new phenomena, and therefore is a relatively new subject of scientific interest, a fair bit of research has been conducted on different facets of the game, both within the field of social science and within the medical field. In this section I will give a short overview of existing research into Pokémon GO along four different facets; (1) physical activity levels of players, (2) motivational factors, (3) risk-taking behaviour and (4) pandemic play.

2.4.1 Effect on Physical Activity Levels

Due to the role of movement as a central gameplay aspect, the game has attracted the attention of the medical studies community. A few research projects on the game's effect on physical activity levels, and its potential use in health interventions, have since been conducted. Althoff, White & Horvitz (2016) conducted a study with the objective to quantify its impact on physical activity, using sensor data from 32.000 Microsoft Band over the course of three months. According to their results, the combination of gameplay and physical activity resulted in a substantial *short-term* increase in physical activity, especially amongst active players. On average users increased their daily physical activity with an average of 1473 steps, or a 25% increase, compared to their prior activity. Their results showed that Pokémon GO had the ability to increase daily activity amongst all demographics, regardless of gender, weight status or prior physical activity levels. In particular, Pokémon GO was found to be able to reach and activize low-activity populations to a degree that existing interventions and health apps were unable to (p. 1). Similarly, Nigg, Mateo & An (2017) conducted a small-N quantitative survey study on the game's effect on sedentary behaviours. Their results indicated that active players increased their moderate to vigorous physical activity by approximately 50 minutes per week, and reduced their sedentary behaviours - such as watching TV and surfing online - by approximately 30 minutes per day. A change in time spent playing other video games was not found (p.38). In light of this,

one may argue that Pokémon GO has the potential to promote healthy behaviours across demographics, but especially amongst the most sedentary part of the population.

2.4.2 Motivational Factors

Previous research on the motivations of Pokémon GO players have indicated that gameplay patterns may be linked to differences in personality traits and motivational factors. According to Kaczmarek et.al (2017, p. 357), motivational models on role-playing games account for three main motives for play; achievements, immersion and socialising (Yee, 2006; Yee et al., 2012). Firstly, players that have high *achievements* as a main motive for play are motivated by acquiring and testing their power within the game. Such Pokémon GO players might especially enjoy the collection of rare and powerful Pokémon, and enjoy competing with or against other players. Secondly, those who have high *immersion* as a main motive appreciate and enjoy the unique characteristics of the game and its storyline. Such players might especially enjoy exploring the world of Pokémon GO for the sake of exploration, and acquiring knowledge about the different Pokémon species and the different regions of the Pokémon world. Lastly, players that have socialisation as a main motive utilises gameplay as an opportunity to interact with other players and expand their social network. In Pokémon GO, such players can meet up with other players at Gyms and at real-word events for physical interaction, and participate in virtual interaction via social networking sites. Due to the fact that Pokémon GO is considered to be a sort of gamification of health behaviours, Kaczmarek et.al suggests *health* as a fourth gameplay motive. Those who have this as a main motive are more likely to keep playing because they are aware that the game might help them introduce and maintain healthy behaviours (Kaczmarek et.al, 2017, p. 357).

2.4.3 Risk-taking Behaviour

As illustrated in the previous sections, playing Pokémon GO can have a positive impact on players' physical and psychological well-being, via increased physical movement and

satisfaction of motivational needs. However, while the incentivization of real-world exploration may be viewed as positive, previous research has indicated that there might be significant risk involved with playing Pokémon GO outside, which in certain contexts can mean a threat to health and safety. Wagner-Greene et al. (2017) conducted a local convenience sample survey of 620 adult players, who were intercepted while playing, to investigate the types of risk-taking behaviours that Pokémon GO players participate in. The results showed that many players were likely or very likely to play the game while biking (43%), while walking around without paying attention to their surroundings (32%), and while driving (27%). Quite a few of the respondents were either likely or very likely to sacrifice sleep to play the game more (38%). The results showed significant difference between the genders - whereas men were more likely to play while biking and driving, playing in areas where they felt unsafe or trespassing on private property - and between age groups - whereas players aged 24 or younger were more likely to participate in risk-taking behaviours than players aged 25 and older (p. 35).

2.4.4 Pandemic Play

Due to the fact that the field of research on Pokémon GO is quite new, and that the pandemic is quite recent, a limited amount of studies have thus far been conducted on the subject of Pokémon GO during the pandemic. However, some studies about this relatively narrow research subject have recently been published. Laato, Islam & Laine (2020) conducted a quantitative inquiry into whether locations-based games (RBG), such as Pokémon GO, motivated players to socialize during the pandemic. By utilising cross-section survey data from 855 Finish players (p. 1), they found that attitudes towards (1) *governmental measures* and attitudes towards the (2) *implemented countermeasures*, as well as (3) *perceived severity* of the pandemic situation was also found to be positively correlated with intention to reduce social play. The only factor that was found to have a negative impact on intention to reduce social play was playing *intensity*. High-intensity players were found to be less motivated to change their social playing behaviour as low intensity players. The impact of this factor was however found to be quite small. Overall, players were found to be more motivated by the perceived severity of the pandemic to reduce

social playing, than they were to continue their social playing based on incentives provided by the game's focus on social interaction (p.8).

Similarly, Lato, Laine & Islam (2020) conducted a study on whether the pandemic, governmental measures and the implemented countermeasures had an effect on the frequency of social play during the first three months of the pandemic in Finland. In addition to observing an active Raid chat to collect data on the behaviour of Finish players, they also collected data via three of the largest international subreddits for Pokémon GO players, concerning responses to the pandemic and the implemented countermeasures. While the results from the Reddit inquiry showed a high response efficacy with regard to self-isolation amongst players, and thankfulness for the countermeasures, the results from the observation of the Raid chat showed the contrary. These showed that the behaviour of these players were overwhelmingly more impacted by the game's rewards than covid-19. Niantic was found to have significant influence over the movement of its players, based on the existence of incentive for physical movement, which in this case led to the continuance of social play over isolated play. Based on this, they argued that because of their influence, Niantic would be able to manipulate their players' movements by offering digital Raid rewards (p. 18). This inquiry was conducted at the very beginning of the pandemic, before some of the major countermeasures were implemented.

In light of the results of these two studies, Pokémon GO players appear to have been (1) likely to reduce their social play based on local restrictions and fear of contamination, and (2) continue their social play as long as there are significant rewards and incentives to do so. The combination of these findings provide an interesting backdrop to this inquiry.

3. Methodology

The purpose of this inquiry is to explore how Pokémon GO players in Trondheim have played the game before and during the Covid-19 pandemic. In particular, I want to focus on whether their motivations to play have changed, and if so, in which ways. In addition, whether or not the implemented countermeasures by Niantic has had an effect on the behaviour of players is especially interesting to explore. This thesis will hopefully provide insight into how the behaviours of players can change in an extraordinary situation, with or without the mitigation of countermeasures put in place by game developers. In this section, I will present methodological considerations for - and procedures used in - this inquiry.

3.1 Qualitative Research

Within contemporary social research there are two main disciplines; quantitative and qualitative research. These two disciplines have different philosophies of science; thoughts on what science is, and what science ought to be. While quantitative research seek to *measure* social phenomena, though surveys or experiments, to uncover correlations and causes, qualitative research seeks to *interpret* social phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them, through interviews or observation (Risjord, 2014, p. 9; Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 4). The main competing ideas in this debate deals with the concept of epistemological naturalism. Can humans be considered a part of the natural world, and do we need other methods and theories than those used in natural science to understand social phenomena? Naturalists believe that humans, and by extension social phenomena, must be understood with the same causes and mechanisms that we use to understand other natural entities. Those who oppose naturalism, however, believe that humans and human societies are distinctive from other natural entities in some deep way, and must be measured with their own methods (Risjord, 2014, p. 9). Nevertheless, both disciplines indeed have their own distinctive value within contemporary social research, based on the nature of what the research is attempting to uncover. This thesis places itself within the qualitative

discipline, and in-depth interviews will be used as the primary data collection method. In particular, I will be using a specific type of interview style; the *semi-structured interview*.

3.2 Semi-Structured Interview

Developing a rigorous interview guide enhances the trustworthiness of the inquiry in several ways. It can help secure both credibility, confirmability and dependability of the research project. This interview guide was developed based on the framework of Kallio et.al (2016). The process has five separate phases; (1) identifying the prerequisites for using semi-structured interviews; (2) retrieving and using previous knowledge; (3) formulating a preliminary semi-structured interview guide; (4) pilot testing the interview guide; and lastly (5) presenting the complete semi-structured interview guide.

In the first phase, I identified the need for a semi-structured interview style, based on the aim of the research project. The need for a semi-structured interview style was identified based on three factors. Firstly, a semi-structured interview style allows for more *flexibility* in the questions that are being asked. This interview style gives me the ability to ask pre-formulated questions, while also allowing me to ask follow up questions to dive deeper into particular subjects of interest. Some informants may have more rigorous knowledge and interesting perspectives about one theme compared to another. This style therefore allows for empirical deep diving into certain themes that seem especially interesting in the moment, based on each individual informant's answers to the questions. Secondly, it allows for more flexibility in the answers given by the informants. While I mostly followed the interview guide, the informants could choose to give spontaneous answers which did not necessarily answer a specific question, but which are nevertheless relevant to the inquiry. In cases where informants strayed away from the subject at hand, I could redirect them back to it. My problem formulation is centred around experiences of playing Pokémon GO, and any and all responses regarding this theme may potentially be relevant. Thirdly, semi-structured interviews offer a more conversational style. This can create a more comfortable, less mechanical, interview atmosphere. Given that the interviews were

conducted digitally, which may feel less organic than face-to-face interviews, the need to create a comfortable atmosphere was especially relevant in this context.
In the second and third phase, I identified relevant *experiential* knowledge regarding Pokémon GO and its features, and subsequently constructed a preliminary interview guide. Because I wished to utilise an inductive analytical method, I decided that the interview guide should not be influenced by previous research and theory. Thus, I did not perform a literature review at this stage in the project, but rather chose to base the preliminary interview guide on my own experiential knowledge. Had I not had any previous knowledge of Pokémon GO, I would have had to research the subject in depth, to fully understand the mechanics and functions of the game. However, as an experienced player of the game, I had enough experiential knowledge about these features to be able to construct a thematically relevant interview guide.

The preliminary interview guide featured six warm-up questions and 17 main questions. The main questions were divided into 4 overall themes; introductory questions, motivation, playstyle, and Niantic's implemented countermeasures. Some of these had predefined follow up questions, while the rest left room for improvised follow-up questions. All questions were formulated to be as open-ended, non-leading and clearly worded as possible. The complete interview guide, translated from its original form of Norwegian into English, can be found in Appendix 2.

In the fourth phase, I conducted a pilot test interview. The participant of the pilot interview should have the same background as the informants, to test whether the interview guide fits the target group. Therefore, I recruited a friend of mine, who is also an active Pokémon GO player, to test the interview guide. The interview was conducted digitally, in the same environment as the official interviews. The purpose of this was to also test the digital interview setting. After the interview was conducted, I sat down with the test-informant to discuss potential improvements to the preliminary interview guide. The pilot interview turned out to be quite short in duration. I therefore decided to add one new category with six additional questions. This category consists of a set of questions on specific gameplay functions. It is meant to incentivize deeper reflection about specific functions, which may have previously been mentioned in the interview, but not yet explored in depth. In addition, the digital interview setting seemed to be working quite well, and the conversational style had a comforting effect on both parts. However, there was a small issue

with the audio recording. When using an external audio recorder to record the interview, the responses of the test-informant were a little unclear on the recording. Therefore, I decided to utilise an internal audio-video recorder instead of an external one, to increase the sound quality of the recording. Finally, because the fifth and last phase appeared to be more relevant within academic communities, and less relevant for a master's thesis project, I chose to skip this phase altogether.

3.3 Selection and Data Collection

In this thesis I wish to investigate whether, and how, the motivation of Pokémon GO players in Trondheim have changed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of this, the informants in this study need to meet a few specific criteria. The informants need (1) to have enough experience with playing Pokémon GO both before and during the pandemic, (2) reside in Trondheim, and (3) be above the age of consent.

Personal reflections about - and opinions on - playing Pokémon GO is the most important aspect of this inquiry. Its success relies on the informants' ability to reflect on their experiences, and have enough experience to reflect on. The informants need not only have enough experience playing the game in a pre-pandemic context, but also have experience with playing it during the pandemic. Both of these factors are important, for the informants - to be able to draw comparisons themselves between their experiences in both contexts, but also for me as a researcher - to ensure that the collected data fits the problem formulation. The definition of what *enough* experience entails may be a bit unclear. All players of Pokémon GO naturally have their own play styles and different motivations to play. Some players may have played actively throughout their entire Pokémon GO experience, while others may have taken shorter or longer breaks between active periods of play. As a general measure, I decided that informants should have at least one year of experience before the pandemic, or in other words, have played since at least 01.01.2019. All informants in this study greatly exceeded this minimum. Secondly, informants must have resided in Trondheim both before and during the pandemic. This criteria ensures that there is a good basis for comparison between an individual informant's experiences

over time, but also between the different informants' experiences. In addition, because this thesis largely focuses on playing Pokémon GO in a pandemic context, only including informants from Trondheim ensures that all informants have played the game in the same Covid-19 environment, with the same local restrictions and the same virus contamination level. Lastly, all informants must be over the age of 18. Pokémon GO is a game played by all ages. Ensuring that all informants are over the age of consent is important for them to be able to actively consent to their involvement without having to obtain consent from parents.

My initial recruitment tactic was to utilise some of the digital community forums used by players in Trondheim. I published a recruitment post on both the local 'Pokémon GO Trondheim' Facebook page and a local Pokémon GO Discord server. Initially, many members of the Facebook group voiced their interest in participating. However, when I reached out to them, about half of those who were initially interested did not respond. I was able to successfully recruit four members of the Facebook group, and none from the Discord server voiced their interest. Because four informants was far from sufficient, I had to supplement. I reached out to several people whom I knew were active Pokémon GO players, and managed to recruit three additional informants. Furthermore, I managed to recruit two informants through one of the existing informants. The table below provides an overview of the nine informants of this study:

Table 2: Overview of Informants

	Gender	Age	Level	Played since
Charmander	Male	30-39	49	2018
Giratina	Female	50-59	47	2016
Dragonite	Male	20-29	35	2016
Kyogre	Female	50-59	41	2018
Melmetal	Male	40-49	43	2018
Mewtwo	Male	30-39	42	2016
Salamence	Male	30-39	39	2016
Shellder	Male	20-29	39	2016
Whimsicott	Male	20-29	39	2016

All interviews were conducted during January and early February 2022. In this period, Covid-19 cases were rapidly rising nationwide. To ensure the safety of everyone involved, I chose to

conduct all interviews digitally. The interviews were conducted via the video conferencing software Microsoft Teams. Prior to the interview, the informants were given a consent form that had been reviewed and approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). The purpose of a consent form is to provide the informants with relevant information on the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement and their rights as participants, and how their data will be processed. Participants have the right to withdraw from the project at any time. By signing the consent form, the informants consent to the interviews being recorded. For the consent form and the NSD approval, see Appendix 3 and 4.

3.4 Instruments and Anonymization

As previously mentioned, all interviews were conducted digitally through Microsoft Teams. The interviews were recorded through the built-in recording function on Teams, instead of an external audio recorder. As the audio recording from the test interview was deemed to be sub-optimal, this was done to ensure that the audio quality was as optimal as possible for transcription purposes. Because the recording function on Teams automatically records both audio and video, participants were given the choice to turn off their web camera, to ensure that they could stay visually anonymous on the recording if they so wished. They were informed of this choice, and could choose to actively consent (or not) before the recording started. After the interview had finished, the interview recordings were automatically uploaded to OneDrive. The OneDrive is connected to my personal NTNU student account, which has a two-factor authorization login to access. This means that only I have access to the recordings, and that the recordings are securely stored. In addition, because the informants were given the status of guests, they did not have access to the meeting chat, and thus did not have access to the interview recording. As detailed in the consent form, all recordings and other materials that may be used to identify the informants of this study will be deleted at project's end, which in this case is July 1st, 2022.

The question of anonymity is a central concern in social science research. While the subject matter of this thesis may not be considered sensitive in nature, anonymity is nevertheless a question of importance. To ensure that the informants of this study remain anonymous, they were

all given aliases. Instead of giving them a random name or number as an alias, all informants were asked the question of which Pokémon was their favourite. Their answer to this question is their alias. These aliases will be used throughout chapter four and five. A list of these can be found in Table 2. The table contains relevant background information on each informant, such as gender, age, player level in Pokémon GO and how long they have played the game. The age of the informants is shown in decades instead of exact age.

3.5 Analytical Procedures

The analytical procedures of this thesis are grounded in the stepwise-deductive inductive method (SDI), as presented by Tjora (2017). The SDI method consists of six analytical steps; generation of empirical data, processing of raw data, coding with empirically close codes, construction of code groups, development of concepts, and development of theory (Tjora, 2017, p. 19). In this section I will give a detailed account on the analytical process, and the methodological considerations and choices made during each of the analytical steps. Since the first step - generation of empirical data - has already been explained in previous sections, the following section will focus on step two through six.

3.5.1 Processing of Raw Data

After each interview had been conducted, I processed each of the audio recordings into *transcriptions*. The transcription of interview recordings is a necessary step to be able to analyse raw qualitative data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 204). Each of the interview transcripts were written either the same day or the day after the interviews had taken place. By transcribing an interview shortly after the fact, I was able to preserve important personal impressions or reflections about the specific interview setting. This helped me start the analysis of meaning in regards to the interview data (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, p. 207). When transcribing an interview, the researcher should carefully write down each word that is said. The researcher can either choose to transcribe it word for word in the oral style, or reformulate words into a more

written, formal style (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015, s. 208). All informants of this study spoke with a local dialect. While the interviews were transcribed word for word, the dialectic words were reformulated into formal Norwegian. While reformulating words I was careful not to change the meaning of the words that were said. Each case of breaks (...), laughter (haha) and hesitation (ehh) are included in the transcription, to optimally reflect what was said during the interviews. The transcription is utilised as the basis for the following analytical step; coding.

3.5.2 Empirically Close Coding

When the raw data had been processed, I was left with treated data, also called *analysis data* (Tjora, 2017, p. 196). This analysis data is utilised as the basis for the next step in the process; *empirically close* coding. Such coding has three goals: (1) to draw out the essence in the data, (2) to compress the size of the data, and (3) to facilitate the generation of ideas grounded in the details of the data (Tjora, 2017, p. 197). Empirically close coding may be used to prevent researcher bias, or in other words, that the analysis is affected by the researcher's own thoughts, theories and expectations about what the data actually *says*. When conducting empirically close coding, the formulation of the codes reflect the statements of the informants. By using concepts and wording that are present in the data when coding, one can secure that the distinctive content of the data is preserved (Tjora, 2017, p. 197).

When coding the interviews I used the qualitative analysis software Nvivo 12. This software helps to keep track of all the codes that are generated, and allows for code grouping in the next phase of the process. I uploaded the 9 interview transcripts to Nvivo and subsequently proceeded to code the interviews one by one. When reading through the transcripts, I generated a code for each statement of interest. The statements could consist of one or more sentences. The codes were formulated based on the exact wording of the informants' statements, to highlight the essence of the statements. Depending on the duration of the interviews, and thus the length of the transcripts, I ended up with between 80 and 179 codes per interview. The total number of codes were 1003, with an average of 111 codes per interview. All the interviews had been conducted in Norwegian, and thus, all the transcripts were in Norwegian. At this point in the process, I

decided to generate English codes, which could then be organised into English code groups. The purpose of this was to streamline the coding process with the analytical process as a whole. To secure empirically close code generation, all the code names are based on actual statements from the informants, directly translated into English. To illustrate generation of code names, here are a few examples:

> "*I: What motivated you to start playing? S: Ehh, well, one word. Nostalgia. I don't know (...) I don't know if it was much more than that*" (Main motivation to play was nostalgia)
> "*I: Mhm. Have you spent real money in the game? S: Haha, yes I have. I have spent quite a lot of real money actually*" (Has spent quite a lot of money on the game)

> "S: *And then it is to remove regional Pokémon. Completely. Because i think it is worthless*" (Niantic should remove regional Pokémon - worthless)

To ensure that the codes I am generating are empirically close I conducted a 2-step test for each code before generating it. Firstly, if the code could have been generated before the coding process began, it is unnecessary. Secondly, the code needs to be formulated in such a way that it reflects what is being said (Tjora, 2017, p. 203). Codes that represent what is being *said* (statement), and not what was being talked *about* (theme), may be viewed as being decently empirically close. If the individual code is based on - and reflects - what is being said, it passes the test. Because I have executed this test on each individual code that was generated, I view my codes as optimally empirically close for the purpose of this thesis.

3.5.3 Grouping of Codes

Thematic code grouping represents the start of structuring the analysis (Tjora, 2017, s. 207). The goal of the code grouping is to gather up codes into thematic groups, in an inductive way. After the previous step I was left with 1003 separate codes. As previously mentioned, the code names had been formulated in such a way that they gave a good overview of the contents of each individual statement. The number of code groups that are generated varies from project to

project, but 3-5 code groups may be viewed as appropriate for a master's thesis (Tjora, 2017, p, 210). Given that the volume of analysis data was quite large, I decided to execute the grouping of codes in three phases; generation of bottom level code groups, mid-level code groups and top-level code groups (main themes).

In the first phase, I read through all the codes in alphabetical order, and grouped each code into a thematic code group. Each code group was generated based on the theme of each code. If the code was thematically relevant to an existing code group, it was placed into this. If the code did not relate to an existing code group, a new code group was generated. After all the codes had been grouped, I had a total of 40 thematic code groups. The number of codes in each group varied a lot. Some had 1-3 codes, while others had as many as 20-30 codes. To illustrate this phase of the process, here are the codes that were used as examples in the previous section, with their respective code groups:

- Main motivation to play was nostalgia (Nostalgia)
- Has spent quite a lot of money on the game (Money)
- Niantic should remote regional Pokémon - worthless (Pokémon)

At this point in the process, I was left with 40 individual thematic code groups. I subsequently began the next phase of code grouping; generation of mid-level code groups. I gathered bottom level code groups that were thematically related to one another into new mid-level codes. During this phase of the process a significant problem arose; there was little thematic connection between the bottom level code groups. I concluded that the names I had generated for each bottom-level code group was insufficiently descriptive. Therefore, I decided to generate new code groups, or in other words, conduct a regrouping. Because the initial bulk of code groups were thematically descriptive of the main themes of the interviews, and therefore provided a good overview, I decided to use these as the basis for the new round of bottom-level code grouping.

Table 3: Example of Code Groups After Regrouping

Top Level	Mid Level	Bottom Level
Generational Differences	Adult Players	Playing Because of Kids Little Experience with Gaming Little Experience with Pokémon
	Young Players	Nostalgia and Hype Much Experience with Gaming Much Experience with Pokémon

I read through the codes within each of the 40 initial code groups, and generated new code groups for codes that appeared to be thematically coherent between the groups. I ended up with a total of 13 bottom level code groups, and a group of residual codes that were deemed to be less relevant to the inquiry. I subsequently organised the bottom level code groups into mid-level code groups, of which there were 8. Lastly, these were organised into four top-level code groups, or main themes. This step-by-step process is illustrated in Table 3, and a list of all the codes that were used in this inquiry may be found in Appendix 5. The main themes, which will be the basis of my analysis, are as follows:

1. The Nostalgic Divide
2. A World of Possibility
3. I Wanna Be The Very Best
4. Arm in Arm, We'll Win The Fight

3.5.4 Development of Concepts

Up until this point the process of analysis had centred around the generated empirical data. In the next phase, theoretical perspectives become an important addition to the analysis, when one attempts to generate new concepts and theories (Tjora, 2017, p. 223). In this phase, one attempts to identify whether some larger concepts can reflect the main themes of the analysis. When generating concepts, I used the SDI-model's *concept test*. The purpose of the concept test is to

affirm that the concepts are abstract enough in regards to people, places and time (Tjora, 2017, p. 211). More specifically, that the concept can be applied outside the field of study that the concepts are originally developed within. If the concepts may be viewed as applicable, they pass the concept test.

Through this process, I developed a concept that may be used to illustrate how the motivations of Pokémon GO players have changed during the pandemic; *isolation-induced autonomy*. This concept is rooted in SDT theory, or more specifically, illustrates the relative balancing or unbalancing of two psychological needs; need for *autonomy* and *relatedness*. This concept will be expanded upon in chapter 5.1, and will be illustrated as a four-field table (see Table 4). The process of concept development has led to a new link between my research data and literature. While I use this concept to contextualise motivational change amongst Pokémon GO players, it may also be applied to other contexts within the larger picture of pandemic induced motivational change. This applicability will be expanded upon in chapter 5.3.

In light of this, while the process of concept development led to the generation of a new concept, it did not lead to any new theories. According to Tjora (2017, p. 225) inductive social research often ends on the SDI-model's fifth step. As long as the concepts are generic, the results of the analysis may be viewed as legitimate. In addition, he claims that master students are not expected to develop new theoretical perspectives when using the SDI-model (p.226). The model can merely be viewed as a tool to help the generation and analysis of empirical data.

3.6 Quality of the Research

According to Guba and Lincoln (1981) all research must have truth value, applicability, consistency and neutrality in order to be worthwhile. There are however central differences when it comes to the definition of knowledge between the quantitative and qualitative paradigms. A word that is often used within quantitative research is *rigour*, which in the qualitative research tradition is often referred to as *trustworthiness*. The criteria for securing rigour within the quantitative paradigm is internal and external *validity*, *reliability* and *objectivity*. Guba and

Lincoln proposed that paradigm specific criteria within qualitative research for ensuring trustworthiness should be credibility, fittingness, auditability and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1981 in Morse, Bennet, Mayan, Olson & Spiers, 2002, p. 15). These criteria were later redefined as *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability* and *confirmability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 in Morse et. al., 2002, p. 15). Throughout the research process, I have taken multiple factors into consideration to secure this.

Firstly, credibility deals with the question of whether the inquiry provides answers according to what it is asking. Does the research method, theory and the results of the analysis adhere to the problem formulation? Throughout the research process, I have continuously attempted to identify methodological steps which can help secure credibility. For instance, in effect of utilising the SDI method as an analytical tool, theory was included at a later stage in the process. At that point in time, I was able to identify relevant theory in a more effective way, because it was chosen based on the results of the analysis, and not based on preconceived notions about its fittingness. These choices have previously been expanded upon.

Secondly, transferability deals with the question of whether the results of the inquiry can be utilised within other research contexts than the one it is originally developed within. Within qualitative research, this research quality criteria is debated. Tjora (2017) offers three distinct types of transferability within qualitative research; (1) *naturalistic* transferability, where the researcher offers enough detail so that the reader may evaluate where the results are transferable to, (2) *moderate* transferability, where the researcher provides a detailed explanation of the contexts in which the results are transferable, and (3) *conceptual* transferability, where one secures transferability through the development of concepts, typology and theories (p. 203). The latter type is the goal of the SDI method, and thus what I strive to do throughout this thesis.

Lastly, dependability deals with the question of whether one would get the same results had the study been reproduced multiple times, or if one can trust the results of the inquiry. To secure dependability, the researcher needs to secure *transparency* by detailing each step of the research process, so that other researchers can attempt to reproduce it. However, even if the researcher is transparent regarding methodological considerations and decisions, another factor may still influence the dependability; the *objectivity* of the researcher. Because qualitative research is based on interpretation, multiple researchers may view the data in differentiated ways. While complete researcher objectivity in qualitative research is viewed to be unrealistic, it is

important that the researcher attempts to limit the influence of subjective preconceived notions about the subject matter. As previously noted, as an avid Pokémon GO player, I have previous knowledge and subjective opinions about the theme of this thesis. While I have secured transparency by detailing my research process, I am nonetheless aware of the possible influence my personal investment in Pokémon GO might have on the results, and have continuously attempted to minimise this influence. The steps I have taken to secure this have previously been expanded upon throughout the course of this chapter.

4. Analysis

The main purpose of this inquiry is to highlight the factors which may affect the intrinsic motivation of Pokémon GO players in Trondheim. In the following chapter, the results of the inquiry will be presented. The chapter is subdivided into four sections, where each corresponds to one of the four main themes presented in 3.4.3. The results presented in this chapter will be used as the basis for answering the main research question. In chapter five, these results will be discussed in light of the countermeasures listed in Appendix 1, to answer the sub-research question.

4.1 The Nostalgic Divide

Pokémon GO is a game played by many different demographics. It is played by both men and women, of all ages, all around the world. Every game has its intended target group, and Pokémon GO is no different. Since the game is a part of the Pokémon franchise, which in large may be viewed as directed at children and teens, one could presume that the game mainly is played by young people. However, during the course of this inquiry, this presumption was challenged. The informants of this study belong to two different generational groups, where six are in their 20s or 30s, and three are in their 40s or 50s. From here on out, I will refer to these groups as *young* players and *adult* players. During the interview process, I attempted to inquire why this game seems to appeal to both groups, and which motivational factors may differentiate these two. The results showed a clear distinction between the two groups in accordance with three main factors; (1) previous experience with *gaming*, (2) previous experience with the *Pokémon franchise* and (3) motivations for *initial* play.

Firstly, the informants of this study had widely different levels of experience with video games. On the one hand, the three adult informants expressed that they had limited experience with video games as a whole before they started playing Pokémo GO. Giratina and Melmetal had dabbled into a few games in their youth, but had not played any games in decades, while Kyogre

had no previous experience with gaming whatsoever. She did however have secondhand experience with gaming through her son, who has always been an avid gamer. On the other hand, all of the six young informants expressed that they had a long and varied experience with playing video games throughout their childhood, teens and young adult years. Salamence, Mewtwo and Charmander, who all grew up during the 90s, had experience with Gameboy. Most had experience with console gaming on Playstation or Xbox. Some also had experience with playing Massive Multiplayer Online games, like Charmander, who used to play World of Warcraft at a high level, and Shellder, who had previously been a professional gamer:

> *"Me and my brother played professional E-sport for a couple of years. It went very well, and it was pretty fun. But then I had a son, so I had to take a break from that. Pokémon GO works pretty well when I'm going for a walk with the stroller, so it's quite nice".* (Shellder).

Secondly, in accordance with the level of experience with video games in general, the same tendency extends to differentiated levels of previous experience with the Pokémon franchise. On the one hand, the young informants had a high level of experience with the Pokémon franchise as a consequence of growing up during the late 90s and 00s, when the franchise began. During the interviews, everyone reminisced back to their childhood and teen years where they either played Pokémon Games, watched the TV show, collected Pokémon cards or had Pokémon themed plushies:

> *"Early in the morning on TV2, Pokémon was the last show on children's TV. I was an only child then, so it was kind of arranged for me to watch Pokémon. And it was so much fun."* (Shellder)

Because of their previous experience with the franchise, many of the informants expressed that they felt a high degree of nostalgia while playing Pokémon GO. For instance, Mewtwo felt as though he was reliving his childhood by getting to 'live the life' as Ash Ketchum, the main character of the TV show, while catching Pokémon. When asked about their favourite Pokémon, everyone expressed that they had a personal preference for first- and second generation Pokémon, because they grew up with them, had knowledge of them or felt a personal connection with them. On the other hand, the adults expressed that they had little to no previous experience with the franchise. Everyone had heard about Pokémon before they started playing the game, but

had no personal connection to it. Therefore, they did not express the same nostalgic feelings towards the game. They did express, however, that they liked the game because it could easily be combined with their everyday lives. For instance, Giratina could combine playing with walking her dog, Melmetal could balance play with work- and family life, and Kyogre liked that the game incentivized her to walk more. In summation, the varying degree of previous experience with the Pokémon franchise between the age groups illustrates how varying degrees of personal connection to the franchise can affect motivations to play.

Lastly, informants within the two generational groups had varying *initial* motivations for playing the game. On the one hand, the young informants expressed that they started playing because of two reasons; *nostalgia* and *hype*. As previously noted, all of the informants in this study expressed feelings of nostalgia when talking about their experiences with playing Pokémon GO, largely because of their personal connection with the franchise. The fact that the game was a 'Pokémon game' was a central initial motivation for many, which sparked excitement and brought them back to their childhood.

> *"I remember walking around with my friends at Gløshaugen until 2 or 3 at night that first month. It was warm and the weather was nice. Everything was new. The nostalgia came back for everyone (...) everyone who grew up with Pokémon. It was magical. That joy that Pokémon managed to give me then, I think must be the best thing about Pokémon GO"* (Mewtwo)

In addition, the initial hype surrounding the game, particularly online hype coming from America prior to the Norwegian launch, was an added incentive to download the game. Mewtwo and Salamence even found a way to download an APK file of the game days before its official release, to obtain it faster. On the other hand, two of the adult informants both had one thing in common; they started playing the game through their kids or grandkids. Initially the game did not seem that personally interesting to them, but they picked up the game to play it with their eager young relatives:

> *"We went with our son to a Mewtwo Raid many years ago. And then our son wanted to use [my wife's] phone all the time to play, and then she couldn't play. I was told to create a user that they could use. When I had surrendered that account, I thought; well, I can just make my own account too (...) [my son] grew tired many years ago. We're the ones who have kept the account alive"* (Melmetal).

Similarly, Giratina also started playing the game because her daughter wanted to play, but ended up taking over her daughter's account when she grew tired of it. In this way, while they did not have much previous knowledge about - or nostalgic feelings towards - Pokémon, a new interest was sparked as a consequence of the communal experience of playing with their children.

4.2 A World of Possibility

Pokémon GO can be played in many different ways, and can essentially be played anywhere. It has a plethora of different gameplay functions and mechanics, as well as single quests and longer quest lines that players can choose whether or not to complete. This opens up a lot of opportunities for personalising the gaming experience. In this section, I will present the results regarding factors which either improve or hinder active gameplay. These factors affect whether or not the players are able to maintain the playstyle that they want, and in consequence, stay motivated to play.

4.2.1 Life Supports Gaming

When asked what a regular playing session looked like, all informants gave widely different answers. The main tendency was that their playstyle mainly is dictated by their everyday schedule. Most of the informants said that they played the game while executing daily tasks. When combining Pokémon GO with mundane daily tasks, that specific daily task becomes an incentive for playing Pokémon GO. This makes playing Pokémon GO a much more enjoyable experience, and helps motivate players by letting them play on their own terms and in their own

time. For instance, one informant who owns a dog, regularly plays Pokémon GO while walking it:

> *"For me it works well because I walk the dog anyway. Gaming supports walking the dog, and walking the dog supports gaming. It becomes a useful thing to do while wandering around (....) I try to use that daily free Raid Pass every day. So i look around to see if i can find a 1 or 3-star Raid i can just do then and there (....) I play every day. But it's probably because I'm outside every day anyway."* (Giratina)

Most informants also expressed that Pokémon GO had become an integrated part of their morning routine. Several claimed that checking Pokémon GO is one of the first things they do after getting out of bed:

> *"I get up in the morning before the rest of the family. Make myself a cup of coffee, make myself a couple of slices of bread. Open up Pokémon GO. Listen a bit to the radio, and play a little causally. See what is around me. Usually there are some Rocket grunts I must take. Some Pokémon I must catch. Not just shiny check, but also catch them."* (Shellder)

Several of the informants, who regularly commute to and from work or university, expressed that they usually catch Pokémon during their commute - either manually, or by means of an auto-catcher (Gotcha) - a device which automatically catches Pokémon for you. One informant reminisced of one time where he used such a device at work as a taxi driver:

> *"There was one time with a customer, when the Gotcha kept buzzing. It was lying there in front next to the cigarette lighter. And it buzzed, and it buzzed and buzzed. Then the customer said; i think someone is trying to reach you on your pager. Haha. So then I said; this is an automatic Pokémon-catcher. I think he speculated then. Haha."* (Melmetal)

This illustrates that Pokémon GO is a game that allows each individual player to customise their playstyle without having to make a lot of sacrifices in their daily life. However, even though many aspects of the game allow for a customizable experience, daily life can sometimes get in the way.

4.2.2 Life Hinders Gaming

One aspect which may hinder active gameplay is time-management. Given that Pokémon GO is such a multi-faceted game, with many things to do at any given time, it can be hard to find time to do everything. Some of the time-consuming features that informants have highlighted are timed quests and big in-game events that are hard to fully complete during the set timeframe. When there is more than usual happening in the game, players don't automatically have more time to do more than they manage to do on a regular basis. One informant illustrated how play-life balance can be hard sometimes:

> *"Quite a lot has been added since the beginning. Sometimes there is quite a lot happening in the game. And I have noticed that if a lot is happening elsewhere, I have too little time. Then I hardly have the time to play through what is there."* (Giratina)

Going hand in hand with time management, is balancing real-life obligations with playing Pokémon GO. Informants expressed that it can be especially hard to balance family life and work with play. A busy life and many obligations can take attention away from the game. Choosing to play the game as much as they like can negatively affect work - and family life. One informant illustrated how such a balance can be difficult to achieve at times, but also how he manages to work around it;

> *"When I am at my most eager it can be difficult to combine toddler-life and work with the playstyle I want to have. But the weekends give me a little more opportunity, because then the whole family can just pack a backpack and go for a walk."* (Shellder)

Active gameplay can also be hindered by physical constraints. One such physical constraint is the difficulty of playing when living in a rural area. Because the amount of Pokémon spawns, as well as the number of PokèStops and Gyms, is based on GPS-movement data, people in rural areas are severely disadvantaged. Charmander, who once lived in a rural location, had to to take matters into his own hands:

> *"I started playing Pokémon GO when it first came out. I lived on the outskirts of a small city. There was not a single PokèStop in sight. I was lucky if I got to catch six Pokémon per day. A PokèStop didn't actually appear there before I put it up myself."* (Charmander)

Even though all informants in this study currently live in Trondheim, which is urban, several of them have had experiences with playing the game outside of an urban context. Salamence once tried to go Pokémon hunting in rural area with his younger nephews, with little to no results;

> *"I have an uncle who lives in a rural area. He has three boys who are obsessed with Pokémon GO. They play on their mom's phone, and it's a lot of fun. There is not a single Pokémon there. That is, outside the city centre. They don't catch any Pokémon there. Maybe once in the leap year. I've been with them on Pokémon hunts there. I don't think I've found a single Pokémon."* (Salamence)

In light of this, while the Pokémon GO experience may to a large degree be customizable according to each specific player's daily life, some real life constraints may lead to demotivation. Nevertheless, even if a player manages to effectively balance real life obligations and game play, a third factor appears to be central to the maintenance of players' motivation; *money*.

4.2.3 The Significance of Money

Pokémon GO, at its core, is a free-to-play game. It is free to download, and does not require you to spend real money to access most of its central gameplay mechanics. However, whether or not a player spends money within the game can in certain contexts either limit or improve a player's ability to play as they wish. The informants were split on whether they felt it was worth it to spend money within the game. Some thought it added significant value to their gameplay, while others thought it was unnecessary. Those who thought spending money added some value to their gameplay highlighted exclusive passes to events, and extra incubators or Remote Raid Passes, as examples of valuable perks. Other justifications for spending money was that it makes it more fun and entertaining, brings them nostalgia, or that they feel like supporting Niantic, while at the same time making the game easier for themselves. A couple of those who regularly

play other games thought that spending money in Pokémon GO was no different to spending hundreds on Playstation games, or having a regular subscription to HBO or Netflix;

> *"If I buy a new book or subscribe to something, or I want to go to the movies or eat out. It all depends on what I spend money on. The money gets spent anyway. So then I think it's nice to spend them on something I enjoy."* (Shellder)

Those who expressed that they didn't like to spend real money, thought it was much more worth it to collect coins through Gyms. By focusing their time and energy into securing 50 coins a day through Gyms, players can save up over time and buy in-game resources without paying real money. For Giratina, being free-to-play has always been an active choice;

> *"It was a little weird decision I made in the beginning, to see how far I could come without spending money. I have stuck to that. So I get coins through gameplay, via Gyms."* (Giratina)

However, obtaining coins from Gyms can be quite impractical sometimes;

> *"I think it's tiring to do Gym battles to get coins. There should be other ways to do it, if you ask me. Because I don't have a lot of Gyms around me right now. I have to go out a lot to get it. And it doesn't suit me very well sometimes. For many it's very easy to get 50 coins a day, but for me it's a little harder."* (Shellder).

All informants, whether or not they personally felt like spending money themselves, agreed on one thing; one should not be forced to have to pay money, but should have the choice to. Feeling forced to pay can negatively affect motivation;

> "*I have no problem with having the opportunity to spend money on a game. I understand that it is how Niantic earns their money, in a way. But when I feel like I have to spend money in the game, then I lose some of the joy. Simple as that."* (Mewtwo)

A few of the informants expressed that earning coins through Gyms had become increasingly more difficult during Covid-19. Many spent more time playing inside their homes. Several said

that they were lucky to have a nearby PokèStop which they could access from their house. However, catching as effectively while stationary as while walking has its price;

> *"I have a PokèStop next to me, so I can put out lures or use incense. But those things cost money if you don't have many of them. And then we're back to that microtransaction part, where it's easy to fall into the trap. It's hard to get around that."* (Shellder)

In light of this, even though Pokémon GO by definition is a free-to–play game, it offers significant perks to players who pay for in-game resources. Some players are motivated by paying for resources, while others are motivated by obtaining resources for free. Feeling forced to pay, however, decreases motivation for both groups of players. Therefore, to secure motivation amongst players in general, a system for effectively obtaining PokèCoins needs to be available to players. This is a function that the current Gym Battle system does not always fulfil.

4.3 I Want to Be the Very Best

As the previous chapter has highlighted, the game has many different functions and therefore gives players the opportunity to freely play as they wish. However, like with any other game, players of Pokémon GO need to know how to navigate themselves to be able to fully enjoy the game, and all it has to offer. When players have the appropriate knowledge about how to play the game, they are more likely to enjoy the game, and be motivated for future play. Players need to know (1) what to do, and (2) how to do it. As I will explain in the following sections, this boils down to two central knowledge or skill acquiring processes; learning how to catch Pokémon and learning how (and where) to hunt them down.

4.3.1 Mastering the Trade

Like in any other game, Pokémon GO players will naturally improve their skills over time. When asked about their experiences with catching, a few of the informants reflected on their

continuous development of skills related to catching Pokémon. Because catching is the main function of the game, it is also the skill that is most important to master. Catching Pokémon, or the act of throwing balls at them, can have one of five outcomes; miss, hit, good throw, great throw and excellent throw. Depending on the difficulty of the Pokémon and the outcome of the throw, a Pokémon will either get caught or not. The difficulty of each Pokémon is not scaled based on the individual player's level. This means that the base chance of catching a Pokémon is the same for a player in level 3 as a player in level 43. Therefore, the only important variable for being able to catch a Pokémon is the quality of the throw. As the player progresses in the game, practice naturally makes perfect, and players get better at making great or excellent throws, which is an essential factor for being able to catch the most difficult Pokémon:

> "*It's not hard for me. I catch almost all Pokémon I attempt to catch. It's curveballs and great throws almost every time. An excellent throw here and there. And quite a few misses. What's changed? I've become better and better at it."* (Melmetal)

Curveball is one skill that players can master. Instead of 'throwing' the ball in a forward motion, the player 'spins' the ball either left or right and then throws it, sending the ball in a curved trajectory. This makes it easier to hit the Pokémon, especially if the Pokémon is not centred on the screen, but is placed on the right or left of the screen or moves back and forth. The game does not explicitly show the player how to do this, or even that this is a possibility. This technique is shared through word of mouth, and mastered through trial and error. Another such technique is *fast catching*:

> "*When I walk through the city, I use fast catching. I started doing it through Community Days and such. I almost exclusively do fast catching now, to play as effectively as possible."* (Mewtwo)

Learning how to do a fast catch can massively increase the amount of Pokémon a player can catch within a specific time frame. The act of fast catching can allow the player to skip the animation which follows a successful or unsuccessful catch. When fast catching, the player can drag and hold an icon on the screen while throwing the ball, and subsequently exit the catch-screen and skip the animation. Skipping this catch animation can save the player quite a lot of time, because the animation lasts 5-10 seconds, depending on whether the throw was

successful or not. This technique is especially useful in locations where a lot of Pokémon appear at once, because the player can attempt to catch many more Pokémon before they disappear from the map. Like Mewtwo highlighted, this technique can especially be useful during Community Days, when the spawn rate is higher than normal.

In summation, while Pokémon GO does not scale the difficulty of the game according to a player's level, the game offers a few hidden mechanics that can make catching both easier and more effective. When discovered, these hidden mechanics offer new opportunities for skill development. In this way, players can continually improve their skills, and master the trade, no matter their level of experience.

4.3.2 Gotta Catch Them All

For most players, the main purpose of the game is to collect all available Pokémon, and complete their Pokémon Index, also called the *Pokédex*. As of March 2022, there are 898 Pokémon available in the game, if you strictly count the number of individual species. The sheer number of species makes the completion of the Pokédex a daunting task. As previously explained, the main challenge of the game is not the act of catching Pokémon. The main challenge is to hunt them down. Therefore, the game's level of difficulty is solely based on the *availability* of Pokémon. At any given time, a number of different Pokémon species are available to catch, either in the wild or through Raids. Because available species are regularly switched out, players have to continually play the game to be able to collect them all. If players do not actively play the game, they will miss out on opportunities to collect the Pokémon they lack. If they miss out, it does not mean that they will never catch them. They might, however, have to wait a long time for those specific Pokémon to be available again. This puts new players, and less active players, at a disadvantage:

> *"For a person starting today, i have no idea of how long it will take to catch all Pokémon, and have the opportunity to catch them all. I want it to be possible to catch all Pokémon. Not that it should be easy, but that you shouldn't have to wait one-and-a-half years and Raid every week (...) That is maybe*

my biggest wish. To make Pokédex filling more achievable for the regular player, who is not necessarily very hardcore." (Mewtwo)

The issue of Pokémon availability is a double edged sword. Some Pokémon are too available, while others are almost impossible to obtain. This is an issue of insufficient rotation of the spawn pool. Firstly, a few of the informants expressed concern over the fact that Niantic keeps reusing Pokémon, both in the wild and in Raids. When asked about their least favourite Pokémon, several of the informants named a variety of different Pokémon that they thought were way too common. These Pokémon were thought of as being annoying, because they were everywhere. The informants had caught too many of them, and they had therefore gotten tired of them. When Niantic reuses Pokémon, or does not switch out the spawn pool, players don't have as much incentive to go out and hunt Pokémon.

"It can be especially boring to play between events. Because then they go back to the same old. It's not like they switch it out with something new. Usually, it's just the same. And I feel like that's a bit tiring." (Shellder).

Secondly, several of the informants expressed frustration over the fact that some Pokémon are exclusively obtainable in specific regions of the world. These Pokémon are referred to as Regionals. Essentially, some Pokémon are only available for people living in Asia, others only available for people in Australia, and some only available for people in America. This makes it next to impossible to obtain these Pokémon, and effectively complete the Pokédex, unless players travel worldwide to obtain them:

"There is one thing I straight up hate. Their regional block. I get that Niantic wants people to go out into the world. But people can't afford to travel around the world. And people don't want to travel worldwide to catch a Pokémon. People want to complete their Pokédex. It's hopeless. I think Niantic is horrible for doing it. So many people out there will never get to complete their Pokedex." (Salamence).

It can appear as though the unscaled nature of the game may in certain cases cause motivational issues for some players. When the main factor that dictates the challenge level of the game is the availability (spawn rate) of particular Pokémon species, players are dependent on efficient

rotation of the Pokémon that are available at any given time (spawn pool). Whether Niantic chooses to feature some species more than others, or chooses to entirely disregard some species, the challenge level can in effect become imbalanced. Insufficient spawn pool rotation and the impracticality of regionally exclusive Pokémon appears to cause a lot of frustration amongst the informants. Even if players gain mastery of control or play the game very actively, they could still have issues with completing the Pokédex if Niantic does not offer them the chance to "catch them all".

4.4 Arm in Arm, We'll Win the Fight

Niantic chose to develop a game which has several multiplayer features, and therefore has the basis for becoming a community game. However, the fact that the game has some multiplayer features is a necessary, yet not sufficient, condition. Pokémon GO cannot be a community game unless players actively work toward establishing social communities amongst themselves. Essentially, it is a community game because players themselves want it to be. They want to feel like they belong to something bigger than themselves, and they want to be social with other people who have the same interests as them. Pokémon GO may even have given some people the experience of true community for the first time in their lives:

> *"I noticed something when first talking with some players (...) they were extremely nerdy. They knew everything about Pokémon. But they had never talked to a living soul about Pokémon before. I think for many, it was a way to come out of their shell. Because finally they met others who had the same interests as them, who were open about it. All of a sudden, there was no stigma about being a gamer, liking Pokémon or liking video games. I think Niantic has made a lot of people's lives better."* (Salamence).

4.4.1 Physical Community

Pokémon GO is a hybrid game, not only in a technical sense, because it combines physical and digital elements, but also in a social sense. The game has many different gameplay functions,

which mixes singleplayer and multiplayer elements. Singleplayer elements, such as catching, are not reliant on cooperation or social interaction to work. Players can choose to meet up with other players and catch Pokémon together if they want to, but it is not a necessary condition. Other gameplay elements, however, are reliant on cooperation. Elements like raiding and trading incentivizes social interaction and the fostering of social community. Because some Pokémon, like Legendaries, are locked behind Raids, players are reliant on other players to be able to catch and collect these. Essentially, it is a game that *can* be played alone, but community holds the key to unlocking the full potential of the game:

> *"It's at times too community-based, considering that you have to be 5 people to Raid, unless you're extraordinarily good. So it's a bit like you cannot play alone anymore."* (Salamence)

What *community* means for each player varies slightly, whether it is family, a friend group or random interactions with strangers. No matter whether the informants noted that they mainly played alone or with others, they all had thoughts about what community meant for them, and that the concept of community had some sort of value to them and their gameplay. For Dragonite, community was the main factor that directed his gameplay, and he had a hard time motivating himself to play unless he was playing with others. The rest of the informants expressed that they did not mind playing alone most of the time. Community and social interaction was merely viewed as a major bonus:

> *"You can play the game with friends. I think it's fun when you have such a group (...) to be able to pack a powerbank and some food, and just walk around in the city for five, six, seven, or eight hours and just play. Talk with each other. Maybe go to a café afterwards. Go to the pub after that, and just trade and transfer Pokémon. So much fun."* (Shellder).

However, the social aspect of Pokémon GO has been quite negatively affected by Covid-19. All informants expressed concerns that the community feeling had been negatively affected in one way or another. Players can still take a walk outside to catch Pokémon by themselves, but feel like they cannot physically meet up with other players to the extent that they were used to prior to the pandemic. Gathering in large groups was no longer an option. Therefore, because of the contamination risk, players have been catching more from home, and catching by themselves

when out in public, either while walking alone (or with household members) or while driving. Informants expressed that they had experienced next to zero meetups with groups they usually play with: whether it was with friend groups, neighbourhood groups, or random gatherings of players at Gyms for physical raiding. One aspect which several of the informants highlighted as a main cause for the weakened community feeling was that very few players raided physically, and rather raided from home by means of Remote Raid Passes. Because of this, the number of players that one can spot in public appears to have been substantially lowered:

> "*When you walk around the city and see that everyone is catching Pokémon (....) One time there was a farmer's market. There were very few people who did not walk around while looking at their phones. Most people walked around catching Pokémon. It was crazy. And the same on Raid Days where some 80 people gathered in the Ila Park to start the 3 hour long Raid route through the city (....) Now there are none. Yes, it's changed. I don't know whether the hype has disappeared, or if there are less players now"* (Salamence)

With the introduction of Remote Raid Passes at the start of the pandemic, Niantic made raiding easier for those players who wished to socially distance themselves. Remote Raid Passes also made it more practical to raid in general, because one did not have to physically walk to a Gym to raid; one could merely sit in the comfort of one's own sofa. Several of the informants expressed that they enjoyed remote raiding, that it was more practical, and that some of them had raided more during covid because of this. However, given that remote raiding is a socially and physically isolating activity, it has substantially hindered physical social interaction and community building. Charmander expressed that he had talked to many people who missed physical raiding, and that he was under the impression that players do wish to meet other players; it just does not happen. When given the choice between going outside to raid, versus staying put, players are more likely to choose that latter, either because it is more practical or because of a wish to socially distance themselves. Charmander also thought that the opportunity to remote raid had to disappear to ensure a reestablishment of the pre-pandemic social community. Shellder expressed similar views. He thought that if Niantic wanted to keep the ability to remote raid in the future, it should all be remote raiding. It would be unrealistic to expect that players will choose to raid physically if they have the opportunity to raid remotely. Naturally, this only applies to 5-star and Mega Raids, which are based on cooperation. Several of the informants

expressed that they still regularly raided physically at Raids which they could realistically win alone, like 1-star and 3-star Raids.

4.4.2 Online Community

Many computer-based multiplayer games offer an integrated communication platform for player-to-player communication, either via text or audio. These communication platforms make it easier to communicate, and in consequence, build virtual friendships and secure effective multiplayer cooperation. However, Pokémon GO has no integrated in-app communication platform. Many of the informants expressed that they had experience with online community building. These online communities, however, exist on third-party communication platforms such as Discord or Messenger, or social media channels such as Facebook or Reddit. In Pokémon GO related Facebook-groups for instance, players can share helpful information about events, find active Raid-groups in their local area, or find new players to add to their friend-list or trade Pokémon with. In short, these third-party platforms help players fulfil their need for online community. This is a need that Pokémon GO as of today does not fulfil.

> *"I want an official communication method. You [currently] don't have the opportunity to build friendships with people. If you live in a small town or some place where the same three players always join in on Raids [at your Gym]. You don't know who they are, but you know that they are active players. So when certain friends [stop playing], it's hard to make new ones who play actively (...) [I want to] be able to meet and play with people who I'm not meeting there specifically, then and there"* (Mewtwo)

While most of the informants had noticed a decline in physical presence of players at Raids and in the city, some of the informants expressed concern about the fact that the activity on online communication channels had also had a steep decline during the pandemic. Salamence noted that there was next to no activity on the local Trondheim Pokémon GO Discord server Raid Chat. While she previously had been a part of active Raid-groups and neighbourhood groups, Giratina noted that there was next to no activity on those groups either. In addition, she noted that few players ask for remote Raid invites, so she has to sit at home during Raid Hour and constantly

check Gyms to see if players are present, and quickly join a Raid if people enter. Whimsicott noted that he does send out some Raid invites, but usually gets no response. In light of this, the analysis shows that because players are less active in online forums - like Raid chats - during covid, players feel like it's harder to plan meet-ups and organise Raids.

5. Discussion

In the previous chapter, I have presented the findings of this inquiry. The findings are subdivided into four main themes concerning motivation to play; generational differences, autonomy, competence and relatedness.

Firstly, the main finding concerning cross-generational differences is that young people, who have a lot of experience with gaming and the Pokémon franchise, are motivated by a strong feeling of nostalgia, while adults, who do not have this experience, are mainly motivated by other factors such as practicality.

Secondly, the game was found to be highly autonomy supportive. Pokémon GO allows players to play the game in any way they want, which allows players to balance play and everyday life. However, in spite of this, difficulty in concerning factors such as time-management, real-life obligations, and physical constraints can have a negative effect on motivation. In addition, being able to be free-to-play was found to increase motivation, while feeling forced to pay to play was found to decrease it.

Thirdly, because the game does not scale its difficulty according to player level, the most important skill to master is how to play as effectively as possible. Therefore, learning advanced techniques for catching Pokémon and honing this craft over time, can increase players' feeling of competence, and therefore increase motivation. Because the difficulty is not scaled, it is solely dependent on the availability of Pokémon. If Pokémon are too available, players will get bored and lose motivation, while if Pokémon are too unavailable, players will get frustrated and also lose motivation. To secure a feeling of competence amongst players, the spawn pool needs to be regularly rotated and switched out, so that all players may be able to 'catch them all'.

Lastly, the most central findings of this inquiry deals with the subject of community. Pokémon GO is a single-player game, with some very central multiplayer mechanics. These multiplayer mechanics are reliant on cooperation between players. Prior to the pandemic, players had to be physically present with other players to be able to Raid and Trade Pokémon. These situations, in addition to online interaction, helped foster social community, effectively establishing Pokémon GO as a community game. However, the findings of this inquiry have shown that both physical and online interaction has had a steep decline during the pandemic. Because of this, the overall community feeling is weaker than it used to be. In the following

chapter, I will explore how and why this change in community might have happened, and how these findings might be viewed within the larger context of pandemic cultural change.

5.1 Pokémon SIT

Pokémon GO, at its core, is a highly *autonomy supportive* (Deci & Ryan, 1985) video game. There is no clear line of progression - players can essentially do whatever they want, whenever they want, and wherever they want. It is a game built around the idea that players can choose their own path, and their own strategies, solely based on their own interests. Because of this, there is a low degree of direct control. However, while the game does not attempt to directly influence in-game actions and strategies of players, its *nam*e sets a particular precedence. To play the game, you have to GO outside and GO explore. Since the release of the game, the game has continuously evolved and changed in many ways. A plethora of new Pokémon have been added, incentivizing players to physically hunt them down. Raids have also been introduced as a central feature, which has incentivized players to physically meet up with each other, to socialise and cooperate towards common goals. In addition, the introduction of the egg hatching mechanic solidified the idea that walking long distances may grant significant benefits to players. Pokémon GO and most of its central features are designed in such a way that one cannot progress throughout the game without physically moving around. In essence, while players are practically free to do what they want, there was originally no way of working around the fact that you have to *move* to do what you want. This may be viewed as an indirect sense of control - or nudging - toward physical activity and physical interaction between players.

The countermeasures that were implemented by Niantic as a reaction to the covid-19 pandemic were, in a literal sense, a game changer. Physical movement and social interaction, the two main ingredients of Niantic's success, did not complement well with a world in lockdown. Players who had gotten used to playing the game in a certain way, were suddenly unable to play the game as they normally would. Niantic were eventually forced to implement significant countermeasures to facilitate their player base. These countermeasures fundamentally changed the nature of Pokémon GO. The increased interaction distance to PokèStops and Gyms meant

that players no longer had to walk outside to acquire resources. The increased spawn rate of Pokémon, and the increased effectiveness of Incense and Lures, made home-based catching a possible option. And most importantly, the introduction of remote Raids removed the need for physical interaction between players. Pokémon GO effectively devolved into Pokémon SIT.

As an effect of the changed nature of the game, players had to get accustomed to a new practice of play. In the early days of the pandemic, lockdown and widespread social distancing helped scaffold this change in practice. An increased level of at-home play felt necessary for players, because they did not want to expose themselves to contamination. At-home play was also viewed to be more practical, less time consuming, and more autonomy supportive. Throughout the interviews, the informants expressed - in one way or another - that some of these countermeasures were changes that they had wanted for a long time. Having the ability to catch from home, not having to physically walk to the nearest Gym to Raid, and trade Pokémon with players who were not in close proximity with them, were features that they felt were helpful regardless of the contamination risk. They had gotten used to a new way of playing, which they felt was more constructive for their individual playstyle, and expressed concern over the fact that Niantic might retract these changes as the world returned to normalcy. In the same way that Niantic had previously nudged players into physical play, the implemented countermeasures have nudged players in the opposite direction; into a more individualistic and socially distanced type of playstyle. While the countermeasures appear to have significantly improved the *autonomy* of players, this improvement appears to have come at the expense of another important aspect of the game; the need for *relatedness.*

Table 4: Isolation-Induced Autonomy

	Pre-Pandemic (physical community)	Pandemic (physically isolated community)
Social Play (relatedness)	Social players motivated by socialization (high)*	Social players demotivated by lack of socialization (low) **
Individual Play (autonomy)	Non-social players motivated by individual play (high)*	Non-social players more motivated by increased individual play (higher) **

*Balanced relatedness/autonomy need satisfaction

**Unbalanced relatedness/autonomy need satisfaction

Table 4 illustrates how the opportunity for need-satisfaction of *relatedness* and *autonomy* (Ryan & Deci, 2000) has changed amongst Pokémon GO players during the pandemic. This table illustrates the newly developed concept of *isolation-induced autonomy*; whereas the pre-pandemic game offered a dualistic opportunity for need-satisfaction of both relatedness and autonomy, the new version of the game has increased the opportunity for autonomy need-satisfaction and decreased the opportunity for relatedness need-satisfaction. This has caused an imbalance. Players who are mainly motivated by having the freedom to play however they want, and focus mainly on their own individual gameplay, have gained from the increased practicality that the implemented countermeasures have offered. However, players that are mainly motivated by having the ability to meet up with other players, and focus on the multiplayer aspects of the game, have been the losing part. Prior to the pandemic, the game offered a way to secure both the need for autonomy and the need for relatedness, which in turn secured intrinsic motivation for both types of players. It is important to clarify that one player does not necessarily have to fall into *one* of the two camps. An individual player can be motivated by autonomy need-satisfaction while simultaneously being unmotivated by a lack of relatedness need-satisfaction. According to the results of the inquiry, most of the informants felt like socialisation with other players was either not important, or merely was a large bonus. In other words, physical socialisation was viewed to be fun, but not as a defining factor for their motivation to play. Therefore, one may argue that the most important need that Pokémon GO players have to satisfy to stay motivated is the need for autonomy. During the pandemic, the implemented countermeasures have not just secured this need-satisfaction, they have increased it. The source of this increased need-satisfaction is increased practicality, and this practicality incentivizes isolated play. And as a result of this incentivization of isolated play, the social component of the game's central multiplayer aspects have practically disappeared, which in turn has led to a decreased *feeling of community*.

5.2 The Isolated Community

Throughout the interviews, the informants collectively painted a grave picture of the current state of the Pokémon GO community. Everyone had experienced a decline in community during the pandemic, in one way or another. Increased rate of remote raiding, decreased participation in online forums, and a steep decline in the number of observable Pokémon GO players in public, were some of the main tendencies that the informants had noticed. Most expressed concern over the direction that the community was currently headed. This concern was highlighted by their reminiscing of the pre-pandemic state of community - large public gatherings at Raid Days, having fun with friends at Community Days, and meeting up with like minded individuals to share their passion for Pokémon - which they missed and hoped would some day return. However, the results of this inquiry has shown that while players want to be social, and want to bring back the pre-pandemic community, things had yet to change as of February 2022. How come willpower is not enough to change the current course of the Pokémon GO community?

With the introduction of the new gameplay culture, old practices were replaced by new practices. To illustrate how these new practices may have negatively affected the collective feeling of relatedness and community, one can use the game's two main social arenas as examples; Raids and events. Or rather its combined form; Raid Days. Raid Days are semi-regular real-world events where almost all Gyms spawn a 5-star Raid at the beginning of the event, which lasts until the end of the event. This is different from the usual 45 minute duration a Raid lasts. The goal of these events is to go out and physically meet up with other players to secure a large enough group to win the Raids, and complete as many as possible. Prior to the pandemic, the practice of meeting up at a specific location at the start of the event, and walking through the city with the crowd throughout, was quite common in Trondheim. Such temporarily formed crowds of players may be viewed as *hybrid event communities* (Simons, 2018). Throughout the event, the community performs several successful interaction rituals - with or without communicating with each other - which leads to a state of collective effervescence. These interaction rituals are successful because all of Collins' (2004) prerequisites are met; players are physically present with one another, non-players are unlikely to intrude on the large gatherings, they share a mutual focus on winning the Raid, and they are likely to share a common mood of excitement and joy.

Through the successful performance of such rituals, group solidarity is created and reinforced, even if players don't necessarily speak to each other. This results in good experiences for the participants, which makes them likely to attend more Raid Days in the future. Players may even add other players to their friends list, or create new Raid chats amongst themselves, which allows them to keep their interaction going online afterwards. Like previously mentioned in chapter 4.3.1, Salamence had attended Raid Days where as many as 80 people had gathered in the Ila Park. At a Raid Day during the pandemic he had experienced next to zero meetup. What seems to be the reason for this change in practice?

This inquiry has shown that remote raiding has become the primary form of raiding for players in Trondheim during the pandemic. This has led to decreased physical presence at the various Gyms around the city, because players raid from a distance. In effect, Raids have changed from being a social activity, into becoming an isolated activity, stripped of interaction rituals. It appears as though the establishment of remote raiding as the most common method has been reinforced by three factors; (1) if remote raiding is viewed to be more *practical*, players are more likely to choose this form over its physical form, (2) if players never experience *physical meetup* at Gyms, they are less likely to participate in this themselves; and (3) if Niantic *facilitates* remote raiding, by for instance offering weekly bundles of free Remote Raid Passes, players are more likely to utilise these. In other words, Niantic has implemented countermeasures which has made it possible to raid remotely, which has made individual players develop a personal preference for remote raiding, which in turn has resulted in a collective preference for remote raiding. In effect, remote raiding has become the new norm. And this new norm effectively hinders physical interaction, which in turn weakens the overall feeling of community amongst its members.

In light of this, one can see that the covid-19 pandemic, including Niantics countermeasures, have created a more socially isolated gaming culture. In this new gaming culture, the previously central community practice of physical raiding and in-person event participation has been substituted with the individual practice of remote raiding. While factors such as covid-19 contamination risk and practicality issues may by themselves be able to explain this cultural change, Niantics role in the creation and prolonged reinforcement of this new gameplay culture may also be viewed to be central. The countermeasures give players the opportunity to play the

game without having to deal with social interaction, no matter whether they live in a high risk or low risk area. It is therefore unlikely that the culture will revert back to its pre-pandemic state unless Niantic removes said countermeasures. In other words, Niantic would presumably have to revert Pokémon SIT back into Pokémon GO to bring back the pre-pandemic state of the community.

5.3 A Changed Game in A Changed World

This inquiry has investigated in what ways the motivations of players of Pokémon GO has changed during the pandemic, as a result of social distancing and the implemented countermeasures by Niantic. As discussed in the previous sections, the pandemic appears to have contributed to a significant change in gameplay culture within the Pokémon GO community. This change, though initiated by social distancing measures and covid-19 contamination risk, has been reinforced by Niantic's countermeasures. What started as a necessary change in temporary gameplay style, has taken hold and resulted in enduring changes to cultural practices. This cultural change, though isolated within the Pokémon GO community, may be viewed as a minuscule part of the larger picture of Covid-19 induced cultural change.

Throughout the pandemic, Pokémon GO has changed from being a game with a large focus on movement and real-life social interaction into a more physically and socially isolated version of itself. If one views this change through covid-19 tinted lenses, one can see how this particular cultural change is not an isolated case. As a result of the pandemic, many aspects of everyday life have changed into more socially or physically isolated versions of themselves. A substantial part of the workforce were moved from physical offices to home offices, thus relying on digital technology to cooperate and socialise with fellow workers. University lectures were moved from lecture halls into digital conferencing software, and students have been spending more time studying in their dorms as opposed to study halls. The same tendency extends to the school system. In addition, the cultural industry has gone through a massive shift. As movie theatres closed down, online video streaming surged, and as concerts were cancelled, musicians started

streaming their performances on social media. In other words, all parts of society have gone through a significant cultural change, exchanging physical arenas with digital arenas.

At the time of writing, the pre-pandemic world is slowly starting to return. Schools and universities are once again open, offering physical lectures again. Workers may return to their physical offices and audiences can once again enjoy cultural content physically. However, like previously discussed, a change in cultural practices may not be as easily reversible, even though the context changes. The informants of this inquiry expressed that they were worried that some of the countermeasures, that were viewed to be favourable because they were more practical, would be reverted in a post-pandemic world. Could this be the case for workers, students and audiences too? Workers and students that have come to the realisation that they work more effectively from home, and enjoy the practicality of not having to commute, may wish to continue this practice. And audiences who feel like streaming movies is more practical, and also gives them a wider variety of content to enjoy, may not feel the urge to return to cinemas. In light of this, one may argue that as long as remote options are available, those who enjoy the practicality of remote options will choose the digital alternative rather than the physical one. Thus, unless Niantic retracts some of the major countermeasures that facilitate socially isolated play, those players who prefer the practicality that comes with it will have little incentive to return to the normal mode of play.

6. Final Remarks

All of the interviews in this inquiry were conducted during January and early February of 2022. This means that the collected data only is able to reflect the experiences of Pokémon players in Trondheim up until this point in time. However, if one takes the results of the inquiry into account, and view these results in the context of gameplay changes that Niantic has implemented past this point in time, one may be able to draw some conclusions about what the next stage of Pokémon GO might look like.

A few weeks after the last interview had been conducted, on February 23rd of 2022, Niantic released a statement titled ‘Pokémon GO Roadmap: Early 2022’, where the development team gave an update on their future plans for the game. They expressed that they would focus on evolving their game along three pillars; real world social interaction, exercise and exploration. These pillars have always been central to Niantic's development strategy, but they have naturally experienced difficulty in balancing this during the pandemic. After two years of covid-19 restrictions and countermeasures, Niantic solidified their renewed effort in slowly bringing back the game to its pre-pandemic state. Specifically, they expressed their focus on exploring new ways to enhance the sense of community amongst its global player base (Pokémon GO, 2022d). On March 12th, they released another statement announcing that 20 physical events would be organised in certain locations worldwide for March Community Day, including extra bonuses from spinning PokèStops in 120 cities worldwide (Pokémon GO, 2022h). On April 5th, Niantic released another statement concerning April Community Day, where the number of physical event locations had been increased to 53 (Pokémon GO, 2022j). The increase in number of physical event meet-ups - combined with the removal of the stationary incense bonus, and the increase in incense duration from 60 to 90 minutes (Pokémon GO, 2022e) - may as a whole be viewed as a targeted effort towards making physical real-world exploration more attractive than at-home play. In other words, since late February, Niantic has steadily implemented changes to - and reversion of - countermeasures to slowly reintroduce a pre-pandemic mode of play.

This inquiry has provided some answers to how players' motivation has been affected by the covid-19 pandemic, and also how the implemented countermeasures have contributed to a change in cultural practices within the Pokémon GO community in Trondheim up until February of 2022. However, it cannot provide a clear answer to what the Pokémon GO community will look like going forward. Research into the future state of Pokémon GO would have to be conducted to provide this. For example, an inquiry into whether the ongoing retractions of countermeasures will lead to the return of the original cultural practices of socially and physically present play, would be especially interesting to explore. This type of inquiry may also be able to highlight whether players are willing to give up their increased autonomy, to regain the pre-pandemic form of relatedness and community, that the informants of this study expressed that they hope will someday return.

7. References

Active Player. (2020). Pokémon GO - Pokémon GO Live Player Count and Statistics. Retrieved from https://activeplayer.io/pokemon-go/

Althoff, T., White, R. W. & Horvitz, E. (2016). Influence of Pokémon GO on Physical Activity: Study and Implications. *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, *18*(12), e315. DOI: 10.2196/jmir.6759

Collins R. (2004). Interaction ritual chains and collective effervescence. In C. von Scheve & M. Samela (Ed.), *Collective emotions: perspectives from psychology, philosophy and sociology* (pp. 299-311). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Deci, E. L. (1975). *Intrinsic motivation*. New York: Plenum.

Deci, E. L. & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. New York: Plenum

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "what" and "why" of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, *11*, 227–268. DOI: 10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2008). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (ed.) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, Inc.

Frederick, C. M., & Ryan, R. M. (1995). Self-determination in sport: A review using cognitive evaluation theory. *International Journal of Sport Psychology, 26*, 5–23. DOI: 10.1207/S15327965PLI1104_01

Grabher, G. & Ibert, O. (2014). Distance as asset? Knowledge collaboration in hybrid virtual communities. *Journal of Economic Geography, 14*, 97-123. DOI: 10.1093/jeg/lbt014

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). *Effective evaluation: Improving the usefulness of evaluation results through responsive and naturalistic approaches.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Holt, F. (2015). New media, new festival worlds: Rethinking cultural events and televisuality through Youtube and the Tomorrowland music festival. In J. Deaville _& C. Baade (Eds.), *Music and the broadcast experience* (pp. 275-292). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kvale, S. & Brinkmann, S. (2015). *Det kvalitative forskningsintervju* (3. utgave). Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk.

Kaczmarek, L. D., Misiak, M., Behnke, M., Dziekan, M. & Guzik, P. (2017). The Pikachu effect: Social and health gaming motivations lead to greater benefits of Pokemon GO use. *Computers in Human Behavior, 75*, 356-363. DOI: 10.1016/j.chb.2017.05.031

Kallio, H., Pietilä, A-M. & Johnson, M. (2016). Systematic methodological review: developing a framework for a qualitative semi-structured interview guide. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 77*(12), 2954-2965.

Laato, S., Najmul Islam, A.K.M. & Laine, T.H. (2020). Did Location-based Games Motivate Players to Socialize During COVID-19? *Telematics and Informatics, 54*(2020), 1-12. DOI: 10.1016/j.tele.2020.101458

Laato, S., Laine, T. H. & Najmul Islam, A. K. M, (2020). Location-Based Games and the COVID-19 Pandemic: An Analysis of Responses from Game Developers and Players. *Multimodal Technol. Interact*. *4*(29), 1-25. DOI:10.3390/mti4020029

Lincoln, Y. S. & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry.* Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Maffesoli, M. (1996). *The time of the tribes: the decline of individualism in mass society.* London: Sage.

Morse, J. M., Barrett, M., Mayan, M., Olson, K. & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification Strategies for Establishing Reliability and Validity in Qualitative Research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *1*(2), 13-22. DOI: 10.1177/160940690200100202

Nigg, C. R., Mateo, D. J. & An, J. (2017). Pokemon GO May Increase Physical Activity and Decrease Sedentary Behaviors. *American Journal of Public Health*, *107*(1), 37-38. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2016.303532

Pokémon GO. (2020a, March 12th). Updates to events: Abra Community Day. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/updatedevents-abracommunityday/

Pokémon GO. (2020b, March 20th). Go Battle League temporary updates. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/gobattleleague-updates/

Pokémon GO. (2020c, March 23rd). Increased Daily Bonuses, changes to Gifts and rotating 1 Pokécoin bundles. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/updates-20200323/

Pokémon GO. (2020d, March 31st). Temporary Changes to Pokémon GO. Gym interaction distance has been doubled. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/gyminteractionupdate-20200331/

Pokémon GO. (2020e, April 15th). New ways to raid, power up your Pokémon, receive Gifts to send out and more. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/raidbattleupdate-april2020/

Pokémon GO. (2020f, April 15th). Introducing Incense Day: Type Shuffle! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/incenseday-typeshuffle-april2020/

Pokémon GO. (2020g, April 16th). Abra Community Day rescheduled for Saturday, April 25, 2020. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/communityday-april2020/

Pokémon GO. (2020h, May 6th). We'll be running small tests for revamping the Pokécoin system. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/pokecoinupdate/

Pokémon GO. (2020i, May 18th). Community Day voting is back! Which Pokémon will you choose to be featured during June and July Community Days? Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/communityday-junjuly2020/

Pokémon GO. (2020j, June 18th). Limited tests incoming: daily guaranteed Pokémon encounters and Daily Free Boxes in the shop. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/daily-encounter-daily-box/

Pokémon GO. (2020k, September 1st). Friends make Mega Raids more rewarding: Enjoy three Remote Raid Passes for 1 Pokécoin! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/remoteraidmegas2020/

Pokémon GO. (2020l, September 30th). Enjoy a limited time free Remote Raid Pass every Monday from October 5 to November 30. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/limitedtime-remoteraidpass/

Pokémon GO. (2020m, October 20th). AR mapping tasks are coming to Pokémon GO. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/armapping-researchtask/

Pokémon GO. (2020n, November 6th). New tests coming soon for select Trainers. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/november-testing/

Pokémon GO. (2020o, November 12th). Limited-time tests: Trade range increased until Monday, November 16, 2020, at 10:00 a.m, PST (GMT - 8). Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/test-increasedtrading/

Pokémon GO. (2020p, November 18th). GO Beyond: The Pokémon GO journey continues beyond. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/gobeyond-2020/

Pokémon GO. (2020q, November 19th). Updates to temporary bonuses. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/update-20200929/

Pokémon GO. (2020r, December 9th). Raid Battle-reward and Egg-management tests happening soon. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/raidbattle-egg-tests-2020/

Pokémon GO. (2021a, June 10th). June events: Get a free Remote Raid Pass from Research Breakthroughs all through this month, and more! Retrieved form https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/jun-2021-events/

Pokémon GO. (2021b, June 21st). Exploration Bonus Updates Coming to Pokémon GO. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/hello-world-pokemon-go/

Pokémon GO. (2021c, August 4th). Trainers can now add friends directly from their device's contact list! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/import-contacts-live/

Pokémon GO. (2021d, September 1st). What we heard – an update from our task force. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/sep-taskforce-update/

Pokémon GO. (2021e, November). The Season of Heritage. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com /seasons/heritage/

Pokémon GO. (2021f, December 8th). Power up Pokéstops to receive better rewards and create new AR experiences. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/power-up-pokestop-announcement/

Pokémon GO. (2021g, December 22nd). Coming in January: New Year's, Mountains of Power, and more! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/jan-2022-events/

Pokémon GO. (2022a, January 5th). February Content Update: Pokémon GO Tour: Johto, a Hop-ful Community Day, the Valentines Day 2022 event, Extra Raid Passes, and more! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/february-2022-content-update/

Pokémon GO. (2022b, February 16th). Pokémon GO Tour: Johto is coming to select cities in Europe! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/go-tour-cityactivations-europe-2022/

Pokémon GO. (2022c, February 18th). Pokémon GO Safari is coming to Seville, Spain! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/safari-zone-seville-2022/

Pokémon GO. (2022d, February 23rd). Pokémon GO Roadmap: Early 2022. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/2022-quarter1-roadmap/

Pokémon GO. (2022e, February 28th). Exploration updates coming to Pokémon GO. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/exploration-updates/

Pokémon GO. (2022f, February 28th). March content update: Season of Alola, March Community Day, new Raids, and more! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/march-2022-content-update/

Pokémon GO. (2022g, March 11th). A new Pokéstop for your community! Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/for-your-community-pokestop/

Pokémon GO. (2022h, March 12th). The Best Places Globally to Play Community Day This Weekend. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/post/best-places-to-play-cd/

Pokémon GO. (2022i, March 25th). April Content Update: April Community Day, Tapu Balu in raids, Sustainability Weekend and more. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/april-2022-content-update/

Pokémon GO. (2022j, April 5th). April community day meetups are coming to select cities worldwide. Retrieved from https://pokemongolive.com/en/post/community-day-meetup-april-2022/

Przybylski, A., Rigby, C. & Ryan, R. (2010). A Motivational Model of Video Game Engagement. *Review of General Psycology*, *10*(2), 155-166. DOI: 10.1037/a0019440

Rihova, I., Buhalis, D., Moital, M., & Gouthro, M.-B. (2015) Social construction of value: Marketing consideration for the context of event and festival visitations. In O. Moufakkir & T. Pernecky (Eds.), *Ideological, social and cultural aspects of events* (pp. 74-85). Wallingford: CABI International.

Risjord, M. (2014). *Philosophy of social science: A contemporary introduction*. New York: Routledge

Ryan, R. M. & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development and Well-Being. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1), 68-78. DOI: 10.1037110003-066X.55.1.68

Ryan, R. M., Rigby, C. S., & Przybylski, A. (2006). The motivational pull of video games: A self-determination theory approach. *Motivation and emotion*, *30*(4), 347-363. DOI: 10.1007/s11031-006-9051-8

Sakar, S. (2017, February 27th). Pokémon GO hits 650 million downloads. *PolyGon*. Retrieved from https://www.polyGon.com/2017/2/27/14753570/pokemon-Go-downloads-650-million
[Accessed: 15.05.2022]

Simons, I. (2018). Events and online interaction: the construction of hybrid event communities. *Leisure Studies*, *3*8(2), 145-159. DOI:10.1080/02614367.2018.1553994

Swatman, R. (2016, August 10th). Pokémon GO catches five new world records. Guinness World Records. Retrieved From https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/news/2016/8/pokemon-Go-catches-Five-world-records-439327 [Accessed 15.05.2022]

Tjora, A. (2017). *Kvalitative forskningsmetoder i praksis*. Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk

Wagner-Greene, V. R., Wotring, A. J., Castor, T., Kruger, J., Mortemore, S. & Dake, J. A. (2017). Pokemon GO: Healthy or Harmful? *American Journal of Public Health*, *107*(1), 35-36. DOI: 10.2105/AJPH.2016.303548

Wilks, L. J. (2012). Social capital in the music festival experience. In S. J. Page & J. Connell (Eds.), *The routledge handbook of events* (pp. 260-272). Abingdon, UK: Rutledge.

Yee, N. (2006). Motivation for play in online games. *CyberPsychology and Behavior*, *9*, 772-775. DOI: 10.1089/cpb.2006.9.772

Yee, N., Ducheneaut, M. & Nilson, L. (2012). Online gaming motivations scale: Development and validation. In Proceedings of the SAGCHI conference on human factors in computing systems, Austin, Texas, USA.

Appendix 1: Implemented Countermeasures

This list is meant to give an extensive overview of the most important countermeasures. It details the dates that countermeasures were announced, not the date they were implemented. Some of the countermeasures listed below are region-specific limited-time tests, while most are fully implemented global countermeasures. Unless specified, the countermeasures belong to the latter category.

March 12th, 2020: Initial Changes

- One-time bundle of 30 Incense for 1 PokèCoin available in shop, until March 30th
- ½ hatch distance of Eggs placed in incubators
- PokèStops dropping Gifts more frequently
- Increased Pokémon Habitats and increased Pokémon spawns in the wild

March 20th, 2020: Go Battle League

- Removed walking requirement to unlock sets of battles in GO Battle League
- Removed PokèCoin requirement to unlock sets of battles in GO Battle League
- Lowered friendship level requirement for inviting Friends to battle in Go Battle League
  Previously: Best- or Ultra Friends. Now: Great- or Good Friends.

March 23rd, 2020: Additional Changes

- 3x Stardust and XP for first Pokémon Catch of the Day
- Increased amount of Gifts to open per day, increased to 30
- Increased Gift cap in inventory, increased to 20
- Rotating, weekly 1 PokèCoin bundles of in-game resources.
  First bundle available in shop: 100 Poké Balls

March 31st, 2020: Interaction Distance Adjustments

- Gym interaction distance doubled, from 40 to 80 metres.
- PokèStop interaction distance doubled, from 40 to 80 metres.

April 15th, 2020: Remote Raid Pass & Additional Changes

- Remote Raid Pass introduced. Available for purchase for 100 PokèCoins.
- One bonus, daily Field Research task without having to spin PokèStops

- Buddy Pokémon will venture to nearby PokèStops and bring back Gifts
- Power up Pokémon to desired CP by using all required candy and stardust at once
- When using Star Piece, Lucky Egg or Incense, a new one will add to existing duration

April 15th, 2020: Incense Duration

- Incense duration increased to 1 Hour

April 16th, 2020: Changes to Community Day

- Event will last for 6 hours, instead of the regular 3 hours
- Bonus: 3x Catch Stardust
- Instead of Lure Modules, Incense will last for three hours
- Buddy Pokémon, who is at least Great Buddy, will bring player helpful resources
- Special one-time purchase Community Day bundle: Elite Charged ™, 30 Ultra Balls, 3 Super Incubators and 3 Incense for 1280 PokèCoins
- Surprise encounter with Pokémon by using Snapshot

May 6th, 2020: Limited Test - PokèCoin System.
In New Zealand, Taiwan & Germany

- Trainers can earn PokèCoins by doing certain actions, in addition to defending Gyms.
- Update 27th of September: All tests discontinued. New system not implemented.

June 18th, 2020: Limited Tests. Selected Trainers.

- Daily guaranteed Pokémon encounters
- Daily Free Boxes in the shop. Content changes each day

September 1st, 2020: Remote Raid Pass Bundle

- Limited time bundles of 3 Remote Raid Passes for 1 PokèCoin available in the shop.
- Three weekly bundles in September.

September 30th, 2020: Free Remote Raid Passes

- Limited time promotion of 1 free Remote Raid Pass.
- Available each Monday throughout October and November.

October 20th, 2020: AR Mapping Tasks

- Voluntary tasks requiring players to physically scan PokèStops to complete them.
- Counts toward Daily Research task.

November 6th, 2020: Limited Test - XP-Balancing

- Adjustments to the number of experience points each Trainer gains from doing certain actions.
- Worldwide: Individual content in daily free boxes

November 12th, 2020: Limited-Time Test

- Trade range increased from November 12th to November 16th.

November 18th, 2020: Level Cap Increased

- Level cap increased from 40 to 50.
- Adjustments to ways to earn XP, making it easier to earn XP.

November 19th, 2020: Adjustments to Previously Modified Countermeasures from April

- Incense effectiveness increased. Now attracting Pokémon more often.

Previously: Increased Incense effectiveness modified to only while walking.

- Buddy Pokémon will now bring player Gifts, up to 5 gifts at once, and up to three times a day.

Previously: Buddy only to bring Gifts when the Trainer is nearly empty, and only once a day.

- Incubator distance reduction, trade distance increases and 1 PokèCoin bundle will show up during future select events.

December 9th, 2020: Worldwide Egg Management Tests

- Three additional egg storage slots, including the 9 existing slots.
- Newly acquired eggs will not count toward storage limit until the eggs are placed in incubators.

June 10th, 2021: Remote Raid Pass

- Trainers receive one additional Remote Raid Pass from Research Breakthroughs throughout June.

June 21st, 2021: Exploration Bonus Updates & Modified Countermeasures

Exploration Bonus (U.S and New Zealand).

- Receive up to two free Raid Passes per day from spinning Gyms.

- Increased Incense effectiveness while walking
- Guaranteed gifts by spinning PokèStops, as longs as Gift inventory isn't maxed out
- 10x bonus XP from spinning PokèStop for the first time

Bonuses (changed or removed)

- Incense effectiveness set to standard level while stationary, increased while walking.
- Reduced frequency of gifts from Buddy Pokémon.
- PokèStop and Gym interaction distance reverted back to standard distance, from 80 to 40 metres.

Bonuses (unchanged)

- Incense duration at 60 minutes
- No walking requirement for GO Battle League
- Can challenge other Trainers remotely to Battle via QR code. Need only be Good Friends
- Maximum Gift carrying capacity at 20
- Trainers will receive 3x Stardust and XP for First Catch of the Day

Bonuses (new)

- Can open 30 gifts per day, up from the previous 20.

August 4th, 2021: New Way to Add Friends

- Trainers can add new friends via their device's contact list, without the need of a Trainer-code
- Trainers can opt out from being discoverable by other players with imported contact lists

September 1st, 2021: PokèStop and Gym Interaction Distances

- After push-back from Pokémon GO Community, interaction distances will remain at an increased level of 80 metres, instead of the previous standard level of 40 metres.

December 8th, 2021: Powered-Up PokèStops & AR Mapping

Continument of AR-mapping tasks introduced in October, 2020.

- Trainers above level 20 can "power up" PokèStops by scanning them.
- Powered-up PokèStops will provide Trainers with extra rewards when spinning them.
- Three levels, based on how many players who scan it: 5 scans, 10 scans and 25 scans.
- Power-up not permanent. Duration based on frequency of Trainers scanning it.

December 22nd, 2021: Weekly 1 PokèCoin Bundle Available in Shop

- A weekly one-time-purchase bundle containing a Remote Raid Pass and other items every Monday throughout January.

January 25th, 2022: February Content Update

- In celebration of Deoxys returning to Raids: Gain up to two free Raid Passes per day from spinning Photo Disks at Gyms.
- A weekly one-time-purchase bundle containing a Remote Raid Pass and other items every Monday throughout February.

February 16th, 2022: Real-World Johto Tour Event Coming to Select Cities in Europe

In select cities in Austria, Germany, Poland and the UK.

- Players can participate in the event, no matter the location, and whether ticketed or not.

February 18th, 2022: Pokémon GO Safari Zone Announced

In-person event held in Seville, Spain.

- Exclusive Special Research only available to trainers participating in the event.
- Attendees can explore the city and meet local and international trainers alike.

February 28th, 2022: Exploration Updates Coming to Pokémon GO

Changes effective from March 1st, 2022.

Bonuses (new)

- The number of Daily Free Passes trainers can receive will be increased
- Incense duration increased from 60 minutes to 90 minutes

Bonuses (changed)

- Stationary incense bonus will be removed

Bonuses (unchanged)

- Incense bonus for while moving will not be subject to change

February 28th, 2022: March Content Update

- A weekly one-time-purchase bundle containing a Remote Raid Pass and other items every Monday throughout March.

New Feature: Visual Update to Gyms and PokèStops

- In-game locations will be visually different depending on whether the trainer is within 40 metres, 80 metres or out of range of it. Will not impact gameplay.

March 12th, 2022: Best Places to Play Community Day

Extra bonuses in certain cities for March Community Day

- Physical events in 20 cities worldwide
- Bonus: Extra items for every PokèStop spin, in 120 locations around the world.

Includes Odense (DK), Stockholm (SE) and Helsinki (FI). No Norwegian locations.

March 25th, 2022: April Content Update

- A weekly one-time-purchase bundle containing a Remote Raid Pass and other items every Monday throughout April.

Feature update: New Egg Hatching Widget

- New adventure sync widget will be available for Android devices in early April. Trainers can add a widget to their home screen to track their egg hatching progress.

Feature already available for iOS devices.

April 5th, 2022: April Community Day Meetups Coming to Select Cities Worldwide

- Increase in physical meetups worldwide from March.

Meetups in 53 locations worldwide, including Stockholm. Norway not included.

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Warm-up Questions:

i: How long have you been playing Pokémon GO?

ii: What level are you currently in?

iii: Do you have a favourite Pokémon?

iv: Is there one or more Pokémon you dislike?

v: What is the best Pokémon you have? (Type, IV, CP etc.)

vi: What is the coolest shiny Pokémon you have?

Introduction:

1. Do you have any previous experience with Pokémon? (e.g. tv-show, games, trading cards)
2. What is your experience with gaming in general?
3. What do you like the most with Pokémon GO?
4. What do you dislike about Pokémon GO?
5. Have you taken any breaks, or have you been playing continually?

   If *break*: How many breaks, and for how long? How come?

Motivation:

6. What motivated you to start playing Pokémon GO?
7. Has your motivation changed during the course of the time you have played it?
8. Are there any changes that Niantic could have made to the game to increase your motivation to play?

Playstyle:

9. Imagine that you are playing the game on a normal day. What does this session look like?
10. Has your playstyle changed throughout the time you have played Pokémon GO?
11. Do you feel like your everyday life gives you the opportunity to play as you want? As often as you want?
12. Do you mostly play alone or with others?

    If *alone*: Why? If *with others*: Who?
13. Have you spent real money within the game?

    If *yes*: Why have you chosen to invest money? What have you bought?

If you are comfortable with answering it; how much?

Experiences with Specific Features:

14. What are your experiences with catching? Has it changed during Covid-19?
15. What are your experiences with hatching eggs? Has it changed during Covid-19?
16. What are your experiences with raiding? Has it changed during Covid-19?
17. What are your experiences with PVP? Has it changed during Covid-19?
18. What are your experiences with events? Has it changed during Covid-19?
19. What are your experiences with trading? Has it changed during Covid-19?

Niantic's Countermeasures:

20. What are your general thoughts about the countermeasures during Covid-19?
21. In your opinion: What did they succeed at? What did they fail at?
22. Are there any other changes that you feel like would have been helpful to you?
23. What are your wishes for Pokémon GO in the future?
24. Do you have any other thoughts that you have not gotten to share during the interview that you wish to add?

Appendix 3: Consent Form

Do you want participate in the research project

"*Pokémon GO during Covid-19 in Trondheim"?*

This is a request for your participation in a research project, which intends to investigate experiences with Pokémon GO during the Covid-19 pandemic in Trondheim. In this letter, we provide information about the goals for the project, and what your participation in it will entail.

Purpose

The purpose of this research project is to map experiences regarding motivation and play style amongst Pokémon GO players in Trondheim, and investigate whether these have changed during the Covid-19 pandemic. I wish to conduct 10-13 in-depth interviews with players in Trondheim, where their experiences will be mapped. The main research question of this research project is: "*How has Niantics implemented countermeasures during the covid-19 pandemic affected the playstyle and motivational factors amongst players of the AR-game Pokémon GO in Trondheim?*". The research project will be conducted as part of my master's thesis in Media, Communication and Information Technology at NTNU in the spring of 2022.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The Institute of Sociology and Political Science at NTNU is responsible for the project.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You are receiving this information letter because you have voiced your interest to be an informant in the research project and meet the project's selection criteria. You are above the age of 18, have resided in Trondheim during the Covid-19 pandemic, and have played Pokémon GO since January 1st 2019 or earlier.

What does participation in the project entail?

If you choose to participate in the project, it entails that an in-depth interview will be conducted with you as an informant in the project. The interview will be conducted either physically or digitally. Whether the interview is carried out physically or digitally will be clarified with informants based on the informants'

own wishes, in accordance with the infection situation. I will record audio and take notes during the interviews.

Participation is voluntary

It is voluntary to participate in the project. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time back without providing a reason. All your personal information will then be deleted. It will not result in any negative consequences for you if you do not want to participate or later choose to withdraw.

Your privacy - how we store and use your information

We will only use your personal information for the purposes which we have described in this letter. We treat this information as confidential and in accordance with privacy regulations.

Only the student who conducts the interviews will have access to any audio recordings and personal information. All personal information that may help to identify the informants, e.g. name, will be anonymized in the data processing and in the master's thesis itself. Informants will not be able to be recognized in the material used in the thesis. The data material will be stored on a closed server so that no unauthorised persons may access it.

What happens to your information at the end of the research project?

The information is anonymized when the project is completed/the assignment is approved, which according to plan is July 1st, 2022. After the project's end, all personal information and eventual audio recordings will be deleted.

Your rights

As long as you may be identifiable in the data material, you have the right to:

- gain insight into the nature of personal information that is registered about you, and be provided a copy of this information.
- correct any personal information about you
- have personal information about you deleted, and
- file a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority about the treatment of your personal information

What gives us the right to treat personal information about you?

We treat information about you based on your consent.

On assignment from the Institute of Sociology and Political Science at NTNU, NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data - has evaluated the treatment of personal information in this project as being in accordance with privacy regulations.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the study, or wish to exercise your rights, please contact:

- Student: Camilla Westvik, by email (camillww@stud.ntnu.no) or by phone (41231807)
- Institute of Sociology and Political Science: Aksel Tjora, by email (aksel.tjora@ntnu.no) or by phone (73412611)
- Our privacy representative: Thomas Helgesen, by email (thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no) or by phone (93079038)

If you have any questions regarding NSD's evaluation of the project, you can contact:

- NSD - Norwegian Center for Research Data, by email (personverntjenester@nsd.no) or by phone (55582117).

Kind regards

Aksel Tjora	Camilla Westvik
(Researcher/Supervisor)	(Student)

Declaration of Consent

I have received and been made aware of information regarding the project *Pokémon GO during Covid-19 in Trondheim,* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I consent to:

- ☐ participation in an in-depth interview
- ☐ that an audio recording will be taken during the interview (will be deleted by project's end)

I consent to my information being treated until the project's end.

(Signed by project participant, date)

Appendix 4: NSD Approval

30.11.2021	Prosjekttittel
Referansenummer	Masteroppgave: Pokémon Go under Covid-19 i Trondheim
713608	

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for sosiologi og statsvitenskap

Prosjektansvarlig	Student
Aksel Tjora	Camilla Westvik

Prosjektperiode	Dato	Type
01.12.2021 - 01.07.2022	30.11.2021	Standard

Kommentar
Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 30.11.2021. Behandlingen kan starte.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 01.07.2022.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake. Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om

- lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagrings begrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

NSD vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18) og dataportabilitet (art. 20).

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og eventuelt rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER

Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilke type endringer det er nødvendig å melde: https://www.nsd.no/personverntjenester/fylle-ut-meldeskjema-for-personopplysninger/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema Du må vente på svar fra NSD før endringen gjennomføres.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

NSD vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Henning Levold

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Appendix 5: List of Codes

* Top Level. **Mid Level. ***Bottom Level

1.	**Generational Differences***			2.	**A World of Possibility**		
1.1	*Young Players***	1.2	*Adult Players*	2.1	*Life-Play Balance*	2.2	*The Significance of Money*
1.1.1	Nostalgia and Hype***	1.2.1	Playing Because of Kids	2.1.1	Easy To Combine	2.2.1	Paying Money
1.1.2	Much Experience with Gaming	1.2.2	Little Experience with Gaming	2.1.2	Hard to Cobine	2.2.2	Not Paying Money
1.1.3	Much Experience with Pokémon	1.2.3	Little Experience with Pokémon				

3.	**I Wanna Be The Very Best**			4.	**Arm in Arm, We'll Win the Fight**		
3.1	*Gotta Catch'em All*	3.2	*Mastering The Trade*	4.1	*Physical Community*	4.2	*Online Community*
3.1.1	Pokémon Are Too Available	3.2.1	Development of Skills	4.1.1	Of The Past	4.2.1	Of The Past
3.1.2	Pokémon Are Unavailable			4.1.2	During Covid-19	4.2.2	During Covid-19

N=	256
Group	Code
1.1.1	felt like you were actually catching pokémon - all they wished it would be
1.1.1	start motivation - it is a pokémon game

1.1.1	nostalgia of pokémon came back - it was magical
1.1.1	main motivation to play was nostalgia
1.1.1	in the beginning - united around the one thing they loved as children
1.1.1	loves the nostalgia of the game
1.1.1	wants to introduce their son to pokémon when he gets older
1.1.1	likes first generation pokémon - grew up with it - close to their heart
1.1.1	best thing about pogo is nostalgia
1.1.1	motivated by nostalgia in the beginning
1.1.1	living the life of Ash Ketchum - the life you grew up watching
1.1.1	downloaded APK of pogo before release in norway
1.1.1	downloaded the game instantly when released on app store
1.1.1	started pokémon go the day it came out
1.1.1	heard quite a lot of buzz from the US - it was cool
1.1.1	the hype at the beginning - cannot be recreated
1.1.1	there was massive hype - everyone talked about it
1.1.1	initial motivation was the hype - heard rumours from america - seemed exciting
1.1.2	long history of gaming - gameboy, playstation and PC - ten thousands of hours total
1.1.2	used to play professional e-sport with brother - took a break when having a son
1.1.2	bought their own gaming PC in 8th grade
1.1.2	have played video games as long as they can remember
1.1.2	gamed WOW on high level - got tired - too much grind
1.1.2	has been gaming a lot since teen years - typical boys' games
1.1.2	playes many types of games - mobile games - too little time
1.1.2	other games they play now are not pokémon related
1.1.2	games a lot - playstation and PC
1.1.2	played MMOs and RPGs since 10 yo
1.1.2	gaming was popular amongst friends growing up
1.1.2	gaming really took off when they started playing playstation

1.1.2	has had a variety of gaming consoles
1.1.3	played the games and watched the show at the same time
1.1.3	watched pokémon on tv on sundays during childhood
1.1.3	tried to rewatch the show later - found out they were a bit too old
1.1.3	used to watch the series with best friend - it was amazing and so cool
1.1.3	used to watch pokémon on children TV - really fun
1.1.3	watched the TV show - has rewatched it at older age
1.1.3	started playing pokémon on gameboy when first generation came out
1.1.3	all pokémon games they have played have saves of over 300 hours
1.1.3	played pokémon gold and crystal - borrowed them - still have them
1.1.3	got a gameboy in secondary school - some pokémon games
1.1.3	has played a variety of pokémon games throughout life
1.1.3	played leaf green on gameboy in childhood - invested a lot of hours
1.1.3	played Pokémon Ruby until unplayable
1.1.3	had played 350 hours on pokémon blue - not including other games
1.1.3	had 8 or 9 games on gameboy - all pokémon
1.1.3	if grown up with games - hooked on pogo right way
1.1.3	all pokémon games are exactly the same - plays over and over
1.1.3	bought nintendo DS exclusively to get the new pokémon game
1.1.3	completed pokédex in pokémon blue - proudest moment
1.1.3	started playing pokémon on gameboy colour in 97 or 98
1.1.3	used to nerd pokémon in childhood - had a lot of knowledge
1.1.3	used to have pokémon plushies
1.1.3	collected pokémon cards - played with friends - still have them at home
1.1.3	collected pokémon cards in childhood

1.2.1	used to game a bit on PC
1.2.1	have never gamed properly
1.2.1	played some games in the 90s - Duke Nukem - jumped on the wave
1.2.1	husband has been gaming a bit - Zelda
1.2.1	played a bit of games when PCs came out - Minesweeper
1.2.1	no prior experience with gaming
1.2.1	played war games many years ago - doesn't remember titles
1.2.2	had a bit of prior knowledge of pokémon - not very deep
1.2.2	bought pokémon merchandise in japan - it was cool when in japan
1.2.2	prior experience - son played games and collected cards in the 90s
1.2.2	had heard about pokémon before
1.2.2	no prior experience with pokémon franchise
1.2.2	not grown up with pokémon - from older generation
1.2.3	mother is high level - does not know how it works - cannot manage to level up
1.2.3	many adults have started playing the game through their kids - taken over their accounts
1.2.3	took over the account when daughter lost interest
1.2.3	started playing through their daughter
1.2.3	got acquainted with pokémon franchise through niece
1.2.3	feels need to stay motivated for their grandson
1.2.3	has played with son and grandchild
1.2.3	started playing because of wife and son
1.2.3	mother has told them that they play too much - got hooked on Pokémon GO - ironic
1.2.3	son thought Pokémon was fun - she thought it was a child's game

2.1.1	pokémon go can be played on the bus - brainless activity
2.1.1	can be played in the background - not taking all attention
2.1.1	helps to have a dog - easier to get outside and play

2.1.1	used to play on the way to class - in classes - turned on Gotcha
2.1.1	played while walking the dog
2.1.1	opens pogo after waking up - catches the few pokémon in living room
2.1.1	catches pokémon on their way to work
2.1.1	makes up for lost play time - plays during weekends
2.1.1	sometimes talk with his students about pogo
2.1.1	plays pogo casually in the morning - catching, grunts, shiny check
2.1.1	pokémon go works well with taking baby for a walk
2.1.1	playing pogo on auto pilot - catching with gotcha while driving bus
2.1.1	used to check pokémon in the morning - catch nearby pokémon
2.1.1	picks up the game every once in a while - see what's nearby
2.1.1	have to walk the dog anyway - motivation to play
2.1.1	play as much as they like - strange work hours - lots of free time during the day
2.1.1	takes a walk with friends at night - sees if anything to do in pogo
2.1.1	tries to use daily free pass while walking the dog - 1 or 3 star raids
2.1.1	opens the game in the morning - just to wake up
2.1.1	playing every day - outside every day anyway
2.1.1	enough time to play - mainly plays while travelling
2.1.1	likes that walking the dog can be combined with pokémon go
2.1.1	pokéstop outside living room - can sit and spin - not have to move
2.1.1	can play enough - not reliant on being on the app 24-7
2.1.1	plays pokémon go while walking in the woods
2.1.1	has done quests continually while on the bus or something
2.1.1	most days can be adjusted to play - except while driving - difficult
2.1.1	does not dedicate specific time to playing pogo - dead time or travel time
2.1.1	plays while going back and forth to somewhere - buss or on the way to the store
2.1.1	collects and trades a lot when wife is at work
2.1.1	focuses a little more on pokémon go during weekends - keep it under control

2.1.1	after work - defeats a gym
2.1.1	plays pokémon go on the way to work
2.1.1	used to use a gotcha when while at work as a taxi driver

2.1.2	a lot of things are happening in the game - do not have time
2.1.2	does a lot of quests - does not like time-limited quests - kills motivation
2.1.2	does not like meaningless timed quests - trading
2.1.2	playing pokémon go while working affects work effectiveness
2.1.2	has heard about people who get sick leave to play pokémon go
2.1.2	wished he could play more - would affect work and home life
2.1.2	spotlight hour usually crashes with work - sometimes play in hiding
2.1.2	busy life and many obligations - can take attention away from pogo
2.1.2	whether they can play as much as they like depends on time period and mood
2.1.2	can be hard to combine family life, work and play - easier during weekends
2.1.2	people in remote areas are excluded
2.1.2	pokémon should not be exclusively for people living in cities
2.1.2	catching regionals only possible for people who live in big cities
2.1.2	people in rural area have a hard time playing pogo - Niantic does not facilitate
2.1.2	went pokémon hunting in rural area - absolutely no pokémon there
2.1.2	remote raiding is great for people who don't live urbanly
2.1.2	next to impossible to play pogo in rural area
2.1.2	when lived in a rural area - travelled to Trondheim to play
2.1.2	no pokéstops where he lived - put up his own
2.2.1	it is entertainment - spends 600 kr on a PS game - why not use money on pogo
2.2.1	spent most money in the beginning - support Niantic - also easier for themselves
2.2.1	have gotten a lot of joy from pogo - would not have used money otherwise
2.2.1	when spending money - buys thing they feel have value already - incubators and raidpasses

2.2.1	does not matter what they spend money on - spend it something they want
2.2.1	has spent at most 500 kr per month - some use even more - can afford to now
2.2.1	spending money in pogo - like a subscription to Netflix or HBO
2.2.1	spending easy to justify - have 200-300 games they don't play on Steam
2.2.1	has spent quite a lot of money on the game
2.2.1	used to spend coins on incubators - now more remote raid passes
2.2.1	spending money - nostalgia - take care of the inner child
2.2.1	has spent real money - maybe bit more than they should - just fun
2.2.1	has used a little money - tempting to spend more but has self control
2.2.1	spends coins on remote raid passes
2.2.1	spends coins on bundles - incubators and raid passes
2.2.1	has spent real money - pokémon go is a relatively cheap hobby
2.2.1	spent money to support Niantic - have made a good game
2.2.1	Ninatic capitalises on events - they just want money
2.2.1	paying for events - extra, more to work against, feeling of progression
2.2.1	bought Johto tour ticket - a bit expensive
2.2.1	always pays for special research in CDs - something extra to work against
2.2.1	does not mind paying for event passes - something extra - more fun
2.2.2	raid days are made for one ting - sell raidpasses to people
2.2.2	if Niantic has open communication - dont feel like you have to pay to win
2.2.2	Niantic has to make money - being forced to spend money - loses some of the joy
2.2.2	remote raid passes - don't spend real money - limited to the amount per day
2.2.2	Niantc must monetize in some way - gets it - does not like it
2.2.2	has not invested money - active decision - makes coins through gyms
2.2.2	lives next to pokéstop - can use lures - costs a lot - microtransactions is hard to get around
2.2.2	should remove cap for earning pokécoins - long finger to the face
2.2.2	does not spend money - saves up via gyms - buys bundles
2.2.2	could make gaining coins in gyms like remote raiding - easy to exploit

2.2.2	could make changes to the pokécoin system
2.2.2	during covid - many have had to spend money to buy upgrades - hard to make coins
2.2.2	hard to collect coins through gyms - should be a different way - unpractical sometimes
2.2.2	Niantic should make it easier to be free-to-play
2.2.2	at most effective - collected 50 coins per day - nice that you can play for free
2.2.2	its okay that you are able to pay to win - shouldn't have to
2.2.2	too bad remote pass is restricted - expensive - cannot buy bundles

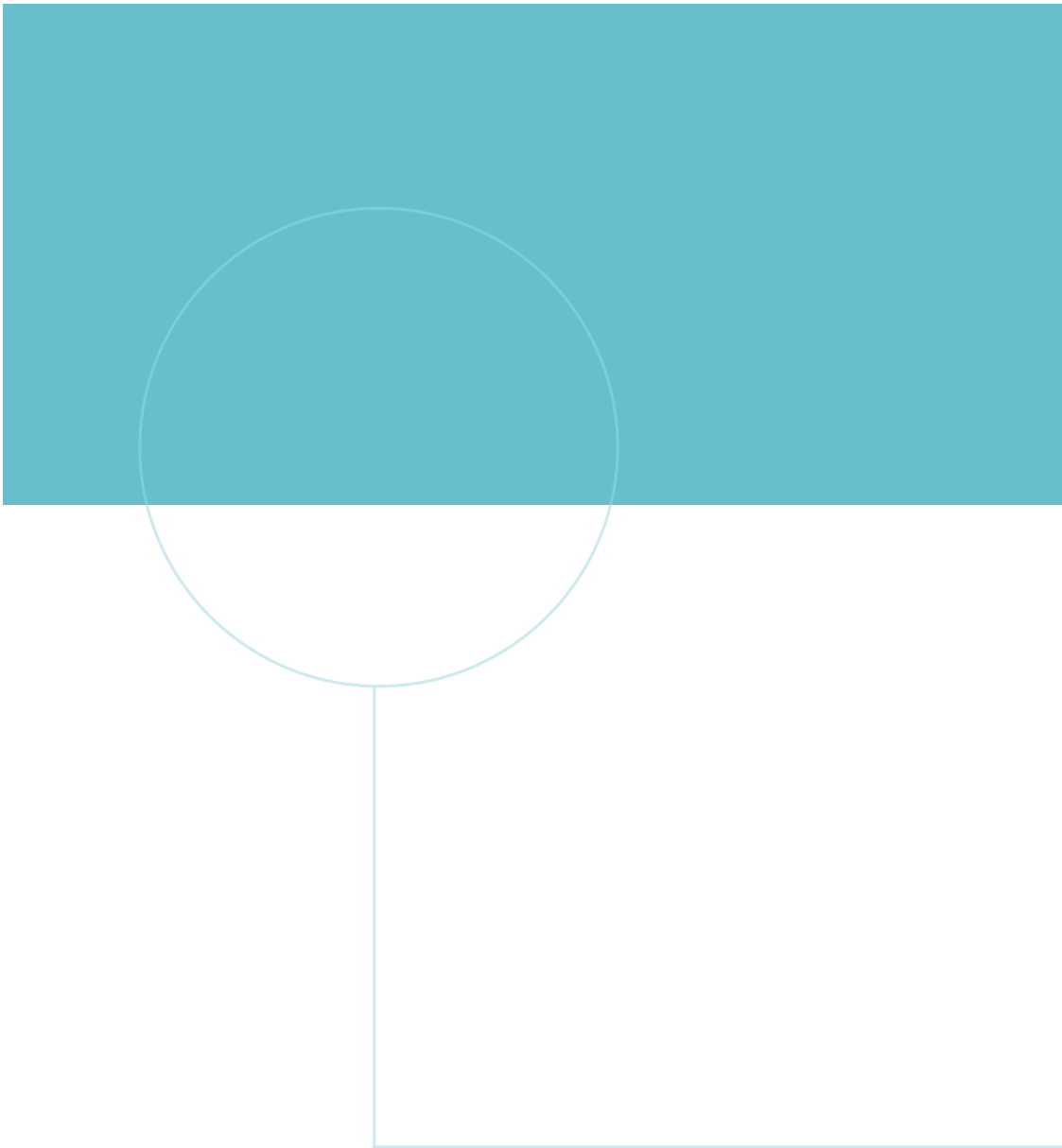
3.1.1	only old pokémon appear in raids and CDs - nothing new - demotivating
3.1.1	eevee community day was repeated - good for them - annoying for others
3.1.1	community day - not exciting to catch shinies - have them already
3.1.1	community day - not as exciting anymore
3.1.1	community days are demotivating - repeated pokémon - have enough shinies already
3.1.1	can be boring to play between events - goes back to same old
3.1.1	should include new pokémon in CDs - not just repeat them
3.1.1	events have been a bit monotonous - repetitions of pokémon in CD
3.1.1	should not have CDs for pokémon with already released shinies - people want new shinies
3.1.1	reuses the same legendaries in raids
3.1.1	when catching shiny raid bosses - not as exciting anymore
3.1.1	Niantic should increase raid pool - should get to choose between raid bosses
3.1.1	repeated legendaries in raids - good for new players - should take care of old players
3.1.1	pokéstop outside house - too available - not exciting
3.1.2	niantic has been quite late in releasing pokémon
3.1.2	long time between releasing new pokémon batches - Netflix Trap
3.1.2	when releasing regionals - only gen 1 - took 2 years getting heracross in gen 2
3.1.2	does not like regionals - it is bad
3.1.2	some pokémon are impossible to get
3.1.2	Niantic should release all pokémon that should be released - a jour with series and games

3.1.2	Niantic should remove regional pokémon - worthless
3.1.2	should have more new legendaries in raids
3.1.2	raiding - exclusivity - pokémon not obtainable elsewhere
3.1.2	you have one opportunity a year to catch a legendary - let down
3.1.2	PvP exclusive pokémon should not be exclusive forever
3.1.2	hates when specific pokémon are hidden behind PvP - PvP is not for everyone
3.1.2	mother will never get PvP locked pokémon - will never play PvP at high level
3.1.2	too little focus on first generation pokémon - ruins motivation
3.1.2	should have more pokémon in rotation - harder to find pokémon you want
3.2.1	pushed player to try and try and try - learned curve ball throws
3.2.1	when playing - play effectively - excellent and great throws
3.2.1	almost exclusively do fast catching - learned how during covid

4.1.1	some people found their crowd for the first time through pogo
4.1.1	community based game is the best thing - more unity around it
4.1.1	Niantic had to extend the game - made it a community game
4.1.1	nice and social to meet up with players - gotten to know quite a few nearby
4.1.1	catching in the beginning in trondheim - city full of pokémon hunters - crazy
4.1.1	gløshaugen used to be a hot spot - went there a lot
4.1.1	best part of the game in the beginning - everyone played it
4.1.1	something special about meeting strangers for lucky trades
4.1.1	used to lucky trade in person - especially at EX raids
4.1.1	in the beginning - used to play with a group of friends - always together
4.1.1	used to drive around and catch pokémon with friends
4.1.1	meets and plays with players in neighbourhood sometimes - used to raid together
4.1.1	used to have a player group through his wife - learned a lot through them
4.1.2	many friends stop playing - should be easier to get new friends who are active players
4.1.2	biggest hope - get that community feeling back

4.1.2	wish for the future - trondheim comes back to life - died a bit during pandemic
4.1.2	looks forward to less remote raid opportunities - can meet friends again
4.1.2	players want to meet - it just does not happen
4.1.2	talked to many people who misses the social bit
4.1.2	removing ability to remote raid - only way to make people meet again
4.1.2	Niantic tries to force people to be social - doesn't work
4.1.2	remote raiding kills the social part
4.1.2	their group have not physically met up since summer 2020 - even if possible
4.1.2	after pandemic hit - basically zero meet-ups
4.1.2	remote raiding take away from the social part
4.1.2	harder to raid and meet people during covid - have not caught all new legendaries
4.1.2	hard to find enough people for raids - many are taking breaks or stopped playing
4.1.2	walking up to a gym - inviting people - does not work anymore
4.1.2	as long as one can remote raid it will not go back to the way it used to be
4.1.2	people in groups no longer ask for raid invites
4.1.2	limited to the energy invested in sending invites - people have other things to do
4.1.2	sometimes invite people to raids - don't always get a reply
4.1.2	want to raid and catch pokémon - does not want to risk contamination
4.1.2	less pokémon go players to spot in public - hype gone away or less active players
4.1.2	before covid - just had to look around - saw pokémon go players everywhere
4.1.2	covid killed raids - people are not outside - raid from home
4.1.2	tries to find a raid in city centre in the morning - nobody ever joins
4.1.2	group play has been on break during pandemic
4.1.2	less playing with friends during covid
4.1.2	pretty long time since last played with friends
4.1.2	covid - less group play - not an alternative to gather large group
4.1.2	used to be a very individual game - now you cannot play the game alone
4.1.2	community day was more social before

4.1.2	previously - more focus on social aspect - now - individual collector gene
4.2.2	member of different social media groups who are all dead
4.2.2	no activity on the local trondheim pogo discord channel - no activity in raid chat
4.2.2	only active social media group is knitting whatsapp group
4.2.2	no way to communicate with people - game for 13 years and older - cannot make chat function
4.2.2	cannot add friends by username - need trainer code
4.2.2	wants a communication method - cannot build community on facebook or discord
4.2.2	are not able to build friendships with people on pogo - dont know who people are
4.2.2	understands that creating a chat function opens up a can of worms
4.2.2	should be able to add people be username
4.2.2	PvP cannot be a community with the current functionality
4.2.2	PvP - tries to build a PvP community - no way to communicate



NTNU

Kunnskap for en bedre verden